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OPINION METER

This week's poll:

After you buy a new computer, what do you do with the old one?

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5 DAYS until Sept. 16, when Aggreko generators are to start working

INSIDE

New iPods

Apple took the wraps off a revamped line of iPods that includes two new Nano models.

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Sick Leader

North Korean dictator Kim Jong Il may be gravely ill, perhaps the victim of a stroke.

ASIA...PAGE 16

Siring Simpletons

Joel and Ethan Coen certainly know their idiots.

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Creationism museum plans on hold. **PAGE 5**

Generators' readiness in question

Bad weather hampers installation of Aggreko engines

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By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

The recent heavy rain is affecting progress in the installation of the emergency Aggreko generators, and it is unclear if they will be ready to be turned on tomorrow.

Everything on CUC's side, including an adequate fuel supply, is ready, but the Aggreko side is having some trouble

See GENERATORS on Page 4

Muña

DELAYED START JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Class schedules of Marianas High School students were posted on the corridor during their first day of classes yesterday. Gov. Benigno Fitial lifted the executive order to allow MHS, Kagman Elementary, Koblerville Elementary and Oleai Head Start to start classes yesterday after the Department of Public Health was satisfied with water quality tests conducted Monday at the schools.

House caps FY09 budget at $156.7M

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

The House of Representatives yesterday adopted a budget resolution that would cap government spending at $156.7 million for the 2009 fiscal year.

The House-approved resolution reflects the administration's estimate of available resources for the period between Oct. 1, 2008, and Sept. 30, 2009.

According to the resolution, the CNMI government expects to collect nearly $170 million in FY2009. But $12.85

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House resolution opposes marine monument plan

Lawmakers want more dialogue on the issue

By STEFAN SEBASTIAN
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BUSINESS EDITOR

The CNMI House of Representatives passed a resolution by an overwhelming majority Wednesday, opposing a plan that would designate a vast swath of nearby ocean water as a national marine monument.

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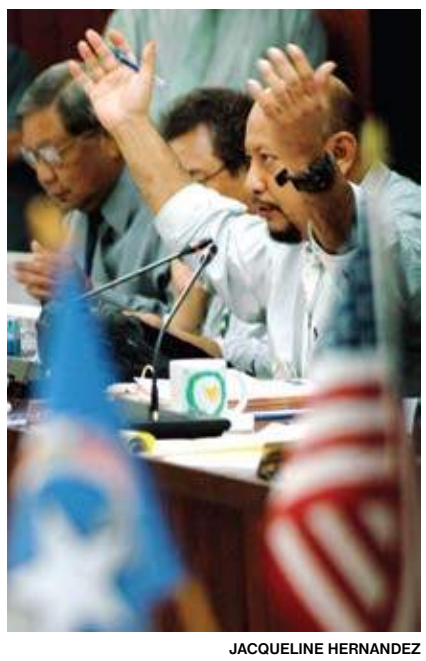

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Vice-Speaker Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero gestures as he delivers his remarks on the monument proposal during Wednesday's session at the House Chamber on Capital Hill.

Hans Mickelson

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Local

Sablan: Citizens living in substandard conditions

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ
Rep. Tina Sablan talks to the media together with Rep. Edward T. Salas and local businessman Edwin Propst during yesterday's press conference addressing the protest action set for Sept. 17 at 5:30pm at the Garapan Fishing Base over the daily blackouts on Saipan.

By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

Gov. Benigno Fitial has failed to provide a solid plan to overcome the current power crisis, therefore citizens of the CNMI must take action, Rep. Tina Sablan said yesterday.

"It falls on the people of the CNMI to call on the federal government because we are living in substandard conditions," she said.

At a press conference yesterday, Sablan and local businessman Ed Propst shared their plans for a Sept. 17 rally to ask President Bush to declare the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. under a federal state of disaster, and to petition to place CUC under a federal court-appointed receivership.

"We need, through this petition, to tell the government of the United States we have a health problem," Sablan said.

Sablan and Propst are calling on everyone affected by the power crisis to voice their opinion at the rally, which will take place at 5 pm at the Garapan Fishing Base.

"You don't have to be American to come," Propst said of the peaceful rally. "Anyone can come. Anyone who can write can sign the petition."

Propst and Sablan are seeking intervention through the Stafford Act, a law that allows for the 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands to request federal intervention during times of a major disaster.

The governor of the affected state must make the request stating that the magnitude of the disaster is beyond the capabilities of the local and state government.

"It's still possible for the President to make a change," Sablan said.

CUC does not just need to be bailed out by the federal government, but it needs federal oversight, as well, she said, "to get some assistance and guidance to address the root of the rampant and systematic problems at CUC."

A receivership will insulate CUC from destructive local politics, Sablan said.

Charles Reyes, press secretary for the Governor's Office, said the CNMI is not able to benefit from the Stafford Act.

"Our Finance Department secured an opinion from FEMA regarding the applicability of the federal act cited by local dissident groups," Reyes said in an e-mail. "FEMA states that the CNMI would only be able to benefit from the act if we had a major natural disaster, such as an earthquake, or if we encountered a major man-made disaster, such as a terrorist attack. Previous neglect, mismanagement, or corruption apparently do not qualify as a man-made disaster under the language of the federal law."

According to the Stafford Act, an emergency is constituted as "any occasion or instance for which, in the determination of the President, Federal assistance is needed to supplement State and local efforts and capabilities to save lives and to protect property and public health and safety, or to lessen or avert the threat of a catastrophe in any part of the United States."

A spokesman from FEMA in the United States could not be reached yesterday.

Blackouts hampering renewals of driver's licenses, car registrations

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The constant outages are a big concern at the Department of Public Safety's Bureau of Motor Vehicle, as they affect the bureau's ability to process documents in a timely manner.

According to acting DPS Commissioner Capt. Dolores San Nicolas, the frequent blackouts are impacting BMV's operations, where it is very important for services to be done immediately such as the renewal of driver's licenses and vehicle registrations.

"It is a concern that we cannot extend a written notice to insurance companies or any other related private companies that deal with driver's license issue and identification," she pointed out.

"It does hamper our operation a lot based on expiration of driver's license and registration cards for vehicles. Those are enforcement issues that [customers] bring up," she said.

San Nicolas said that monitoring traffic lights is also causing overtimes, while the renewal and registration for cars are being messed up.

The police official said it would be helpful if the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. would schedule its rotating outages schedule to give the bureau enough time to get things done.

"Probably, CUC could give DPS at least four hours in the morning to do our services," San Nicolas said. "Then they can shut off [the power] anytime in the afternoon. The public could then be informed that they can come in the morning instead of the afternoon," she said.

San Nicolas said they are now trying to get a temporary generator for the bureau.

"We are trying to examine that, except our budget is not adequate," she said, adding that it will cost more than $12,000 to get a new generator that will accommodate BMV. She said the cost does not include the expenses for the generator's installation and manpower to watch it.

San Nicolas said the department's plan to purchase a generator came up when the power situation deteriorated, affecting BMV's eight-hour operation.

"But now it [power supply] is coming back; at least it is giving us six to eight hours of power sometimes, "she said.

'Hold Villagomez's trial outside the CNMI'

Taotao Tano CNMI Association Inc. president Gregorio Cruz Jr. asked the U.S. Attorney's Office yesterday to hold the jury trial of Lt. Gov. Timothy P. Villagomez and his co-defendants outside the CNMI in order to obtain "fair" jurors.

In a letter to assistant U.S. attorney Eric O'Malley, Cruz requested that the cases against Villagomez and co-defendants be moved off-island given its "critical and high profile nature and the close political and family relations in our homeland."

He told O'Malley that, in past federal indictments in the CNMI, majority of defendants end up with "not guilty" verdicts and the cases are closed.

A staff at the U.S. Attorney's Office confirmed receiving the letter and stated that she would hand over the letter to the prosecutor.

This case, Cruz said, is a high profile federal indictment involving the islands' second highest government official, who continues to refuse to resign or step down from his post.

By holding such a position at this point, the Taotao Tano president said, "is a disgrace and a huge dishonor."

"As…our homeland is tainted with nepotism, favoritism, corruption, self-interest and politics, we fear that this federal indictment will be derailed one way or the other, especially if individuals selected or chosen to be on the jury panel are members of our community that are either family or politically related," he said.

Cruz cited his recent call to the Legislature for the immediate removal of Villagomez,

See HOLD on Next Page

Rota baseball field is named after Ogo

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial has signed into law a bill naming a Rota baseball field after a retired government worker and former umpire.

The baseball field in Sinapalo, Rota, is now called the "Joaquin Mesngon Ogo Baseball Field" in recognition of Ogo's "outstanding citizenship and contributions to the people of Rota."

"Although Mr. Joaquin M. Ogo has been recognized on the municipal level, the Legislature deems it appropriate that his efforts be recognized Commonwealth-wide," states the new law, signed by the governor on Tuesday.

Ogo began his public service in 1965 when he worked for the government's agriculture agency. From 1972 to 1984, he worked as a bus driver on Rota. Also during the period from 1965 to 1975, he served as a volunteer baseball umpire on the island.

From 1985 to 1991, Ogo worked for Benjamin T. Manglona during the latter's tenure as senator and then as a lieutenant governor. In 1992, Ogo retired from government service.

Ogo was born on Nov. 18, 1929 on Rota. He is married to Julita M. Ogo and they have 10 children. ***(Agnes E. Donato)***

BEH failed to issue PSS permits

By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

Because the Bureau of Environmental Health failed to issue sanitation permits to 22 public schools, Gov. Benigno Fitial was forced to use his administrative authority to address water quality issues that delayed the start of four schools this week, BEH manager John Tagabuel said yesterday.

"It is BEH responsibility to make sure and I failed by not having BEH office enforce that issuance of permit," Tagabuel said in an e-mail.

Under the Commonwealth Environmental Health and Sanitation Act of 2000, a health inspector must visit all schools—public or private, kindergarten through college—and declare the school sanitary before the school is allowed to purchase a permit. Permits are renewed annually.

BEH did not follow up or enforce the law with school management, Tagabuel said. Schools are regularly inspected once of twice a year.

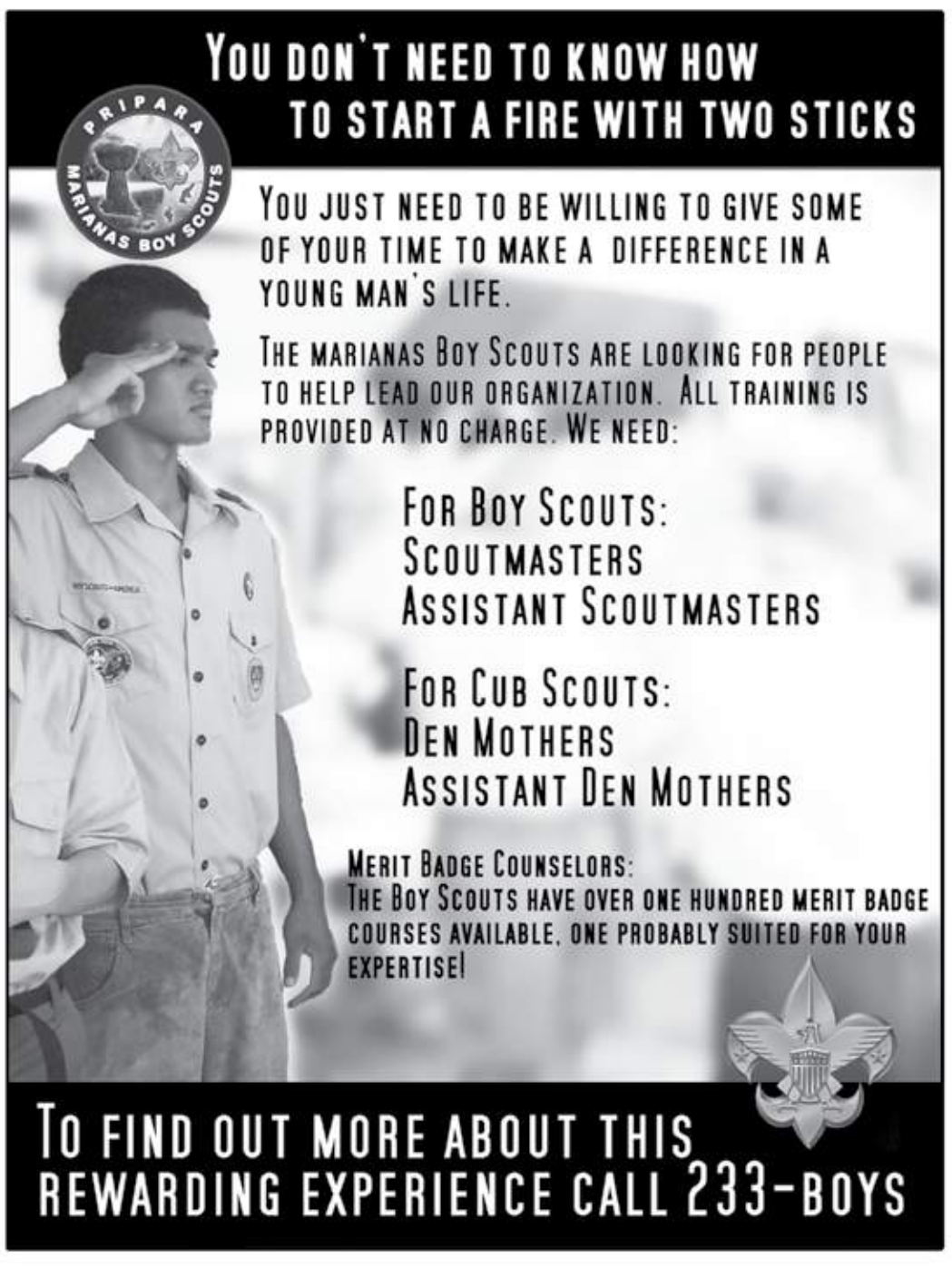
The issue came to light when Fitial asked the Department of Public Health to create a task force that would check the preparedness of the public schools in light of the island's continuing power crisis.

Tagabuel said the situation would be corrected and permits would be distributed.

"I'm not a betting man," he said in the e-mail. "However, Sanitary Permit application along with [the] inspection report will be issue[d] to school administrators from this day forward on [an] annual basis."

He said that non-compliance will be dealt with using the same procedures as the other regulated establishments: issuance of a verbal warning or warning letter, imposition of late penalty fee, then recommendation for closure to the Secretary of Public Health.

Under normal circumstances, BEH can recommend to the Secretary of Public Health to close an establishment, but because there were no permits, the Department of Public Health recommended Fitial use his authority to delay the start of four schools—Marianas High School, Kagman Elementary, Koblerville Elementary and Oleai Head Star—earlier this week after they did not pass initial water quality tests.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Torres' suit over CUC bills reaches High Court

By STEFAN SEBASTIAN
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BUSINESS EDITOR

A long-fought lawsuit against the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. filed by Rep. Stanley Torres (R-Saipan) challenging electricity rate changes instituted by Gov. Benigno Fitial's administration on constitutional grounds reached the CNMI's Supreme Court last week.

An attorney for Torres, Wesley Bogdan, filed an opening brief in the case—an appeal after the Superior Court rejected Torres' claims earlier this year—with the High Court Sept. 4. In the suit, Torres is contesting the bills CUC issued him under an altered rate structure put into action in 2006. A CUC hearing officer had sided with Torres' claims when the dispute was under administrative review, according to court documents, but the Superior Court overturned that decision.

The lawsuit contends that when Fitial changed CUC's electricity rates through an executive order, he altered the law to do it without approval from the Legislature, breaching the limits of his power under the CNMI Constitution.

"One day, in the face of a grave problem, the governor enacted a statute without any debate or compromise, allowing CUC to charge its customers a rate for electrical power in an amount sufficient to recover all costs associated" with its services, the opening brief says. "And most incongruously, the governor's new statute opened the door and allowed CUC to immediately start collecting this new rate before ever holding a public hearing."

Torres

The Superior Court's ruling rejecting Torres' claims was in error because, among other arguments, it ignored an established precedent blocking the CNMI's governor from using his authority to "reorganize" the functions and duties of government offices—contained in Article III, Section 15 of the CNMI Constitution—to enact new laws, the brief adds.

"In all due respect, the Executive Branch does not enjoy lawmaking power and the Superior Court decision is fundamentally flawed," the brief says. "There are three separate branches of government and the Legislative Branch is charged exclusively with lawmaking power as set out in" the CNMI Constitution.

The Superior Court in April rejected Torres' claims, saying in a ruling that the governor has the power to make changes to local laws through executive orders and that any constitutional problems with the governor's order regarding CUC were "cured" by the CNMI Legislature when it chose to forego taking action to modify or block it.

"[I]f the publicly elected representatives of the Commonwealth citizenry felt that the governor's actions … extended beyond his constitutionally delegated power, or if the Legislature simply disagreed with the changes, they were provided with ample opportunity to modify or completely disavow the governor's actions," the ruling said.

In an interview, CNMI Attorney General Matthew Gregory said his office is hopeful the High Court will uphold the previous ruling in the case. The local government is expected to issue a response brief to the High Court in the near future.

Proclamation signing set for Addiction Recovery Weeks

Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela will sign a Mayoral Proclamation designating the weeks of Sept. 14 to 27, as the 2008 National and Drug Addiction Recovery Weeks tomorrow, Sept. 12, 2008, at 10am at the Saipan Mayor's Office in San Antonio.

Recovery Weeks is a nationwide celebration of people in long-term recovery from substance use disorders and their families, and is supported by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

There are 22.6 million people in the United States who suffer from substance use disorders, and are still asking for help and finding treatment to bring them back to healthy, and fulfilling life through recovery. In 2006, 4 million Americans aged 12 or older received some kind of treatment for their problem related to the use of alcohol or illicit drugs. Unfortunately, there are millions more in need of treatment but who are either unable or unwilling to receive it for a variety of reasons.

Tudela

"Luckily, our needy residents can still avail of the services being provided by our Department of Health under the Office of Community Guidance Center," Tudela said,

In 2007, there were 767 events held throughout the entire 50 States, possessions and territories, including the CNMI.

Here in the CNMI, executive proclamations have been signed on Rota, Tinian and Saipan. series of activities and events will highlight the one-month observance this year. Look for the schedule of events in the local newspapers and it will be announced on the local radio stations.

This year's theme is "Join the Voices for Recovery: Real People, Real Recovery."

In observance of the 2008 National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Weeks, Tudela seeks the support of local officials from the CNMI Department of Health, the administration and the Legislature to help residents who are under the recovery program with the Office of Community and Guidance Center, and those who have not yet sought professional support and guidance.

The Recovery Month observance, now in its 19th year, is designed to help people understand there is hope and that help for alcohol and drug use disorders is effective and available. ***(PR)***

ERRATUM

In yesterday's story, "Generators too little too late," the name of the act was incorrect. It is the Stafford Act.

RESOLUTION

From Page 1

The resolution, passed in a 15-3 vote, says the proposed monument—which would encompass the northern islands of Maug, Asuncion and Uracas—will bar local people's access to the region, that the waters in question are already protected by CNMI regulators and that the proposal has become a divisive issue in the community.

President Bush recently directed federal agencies to conduct an assessment of the waters at issue to determine their suitability as a marine monument, a process that is slated to start in the near future. The CNMI's waters are competing with two other proposed sites for status as a monument.

"The designation of the CNMI marine monument would be a permanent and nearly irrevocable federal action that rightfully should require the consideration of the needs and opinions of the people of the CNMI and the potential lost opportunities for economic benefit to the CNMI," the resolution says, noting that the Legislature "strongly opposes" the plan.

In an interview, Rep. Ramon Tebuteb (R-Saipan), the resolution's sponsor, said that the intent behind it is to call for a hold on the monument proposal to give the local community time to consider it. Tebuteb added that the CNMI government, like others in Micronesia, has take significant strides in conserving its natural resources.

"We have yet to really know what are the details of this proposal," he said. "All we're saying is that there seems to be a lot of push for this. But what is the proposal?"

Pointing to the marine monument Bush established in Hawaii's waters earlier in his presidency, which took several years to finalize, Tebuteb added that proponents of the plan have rushed to see it completed.

"We're not shutting the door here," he said. "What we're saying is hold on now. Couldn't we be at least afforded a couple of years?"

Passage of the resolution, however, came with some dissent from House lawmakers who are backing the plan. Rep. Edward Salas (R-Saipan), in a letter sent the same day to House Speaker Arnold Palacios, said the monument could bolster the local tourism industry and conserve a fragile ecosystem for future generations.

Salas pointed to a recent study by the Pew Charitable Trust that estimates the CNMI could see $10 million annually in economic benefits linked to the monument.

"Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I ask you, why shut off a dialogue with the federal government before it starts?" Salas said. "The federal key players will be here in a few short weeks. Let us work together, talk to them and tell them what we want for our islands and not shut the door before this process starts."

Meanwhile, Ike Cabrera, former director for the Department of Environmental Quality and spokesman for the Friends of the Monument, a newly formed group supporting the proposal, encouraged lawmakers to reconsider their stance on the plan, saying young people in the CNMI are widely in favor of it.

"They should give the federal government a chance to do the assessment and bring the discussion to a public meeting," he said. "I don't think they should make this decision by themselves."

Public meetings on the issue, he added, would give local residents a chance to voice their opinions.

"All we want to do is be friendly and open it up," he said. "This is a good opportunity for our community and our youth."

HOUSE

From Page 1

million has been either earmarked for different programs or appropriated for debt service, leaving $156.7 million available for government operations.

This figure does not include $3 million for the Department of Public Lands, which generates its own revenue from the use of public land.

The budget resolution now goes to the Senate for concurrence. Once approved by both houses, it will serve as a guideline for drafting the appropriation bill. The House Ways and Means Committee, according to chair Victor Hocog, is now working on the bill and hopes to have it ready for introduction on the House floor next week.

In related news, Sen. Maria Frica T. Pangelinan yesterday said she opposes a plan to give a lump sum allocation, as opposed to an itemized budget, to the Executive Branch.

Hocog has said his committee is considering this option in drafting the budget bill.

"I don't think a lump sum budget is a very responsible way to do business, ignoring the checks and balances built into a government system with three branches. The House is trying to avoid real work and make the governor responsible for cuts," said Pangelinan, who is the chairwoman of the Senate Committee on Fiscal Affairs.

She said that passing a balanced budget is the most important responsibility of the Legislature.

"Budget sets goals and accounts for how our constituents are being served," she said. "The appropriation bill is useless without a detailed balanced budget. How can we decide on cost cutting measures if we do not account for the funds that are available, and agree on how such funds will be spent? Do we really want to give such blanket responsibility to the governor? Cost cutting measures are factored in balancing the budget. Not after the budget is balanced and passed."

HOLD

From Page 3

which, according to him, was met unfavorably.

"We hope that your office accepts our concerns. …the suffering of the people of the Commonwealth must be heard and justice will be served with honor and integrity," he told O'Malley.

Cruz stressed, though, that their group believes that in the U.S. justice system anyone charged with a crime is innocent until proven guilty.

Villagomez, James Santos, his wife Joaquina Villagomez Santos, and former Commonwealth Utilities Corp. on charges of conspiring to defraud CUC of thousands of dollars through business deals involving needless chemical purchases for CUC.

Villagomez and the Santos couple pleaded not guilty. Guerrero signed a plea agreement and entered a guilty plea.

James Santos has already resigned as Commerce Secretary. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

GENERATORS

From Page 1

with the weather, said Commonwealth Utilities Corp. executive director Antonio Muña yesterday.

The generators were scheduled to be turned on tomorrow and provide 15 megawatts of additional power to the island by Sept. 16 or 17.

Muna said he would not have additional information until he spoke with Aggreko site manager Wayne Lee. He was expected to meet with him yesterday evening.

On Tuesday, Lee said the weather was making the installation process difficult, and he was working around the clock to overcome the obstacles and get everything ready by Friday.

Muña's only concern as the generators are about to be turned on, he said, is the "expense situation."

There needs to be a decrease in costs and an increase in revenue to pay for the generators, he said.

Under the $6-million contract, CUC paid Aggreko $1.5 million as a down payment to ship the 18 generators. CUC must pay another $536,000 within 30 days after the generators are turned on, which CUC will pay with incoming revenue, Muna said.

With the power stabilized, CUC should expect to see a 20 to 25 percent increase in revenue, Muna said in an earlier interview.

"Aggreko can bring in an environment for stability," he said. "We'll realize revenue increase. It'll fall into place where we can afford Aggreko."

Muna said power rates would not increase.

CUC earns approximately $8 to $9 million each month, but Muña declined to say how much of that was revenue because he did not have the proper numbers in front of him.

CUC must still focus on paying past debts, including money owed to the Commonwealth Ports Authority and a debt from an independent power producer.

"The process of recovering still needs to continue," he said.

Visa waivers for Russian, Chinese tourists pushed

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

Lawmakers are lobbying the U.S. government to ensure Chinese and Russian nationals—which comprise a key segment of the local tourism industry—will get visa waivers under the new immigration regulations.

Rep. Diego T. Benavente, chairman of the House Committee on Federal and Foreign Relations, yesterday pre-filed a resolution calling on President Bush and several U.S. federal departments to include China and Russia in the Guam and Northern Marianas visa waiver program. Ten other House members signed on as co-sponsors of the resolution.

Benavente said that Guam Gov. Felix Camacho, as well as key tourism officials from Guam and CNMI, will present the resolution to federal officials when they travel to Washington, D.C. next week.

"It would have been nice if we had actually adopted the resolution, but we didn't get a chance to do it. At least, we have majority of the House members signing in support of the resolution," he said.

The resolution echoes a July 2008 report by the Marianas Integrated Immigration Task Force, a group of CNMI and Guam officials organized shortly after passage of the CNMI immigration federalization law in May 2008.

The resolution outlined the economic benefits gained by the Northern Marianas from hosting Russia and Chinese tourists over the past 10 years. It also said the Commonwealth has over this period developed an effective system for monitoring the arrival and departure of these tourists.

Over the past decade, the resolution said, approximately 400,000 Russian and Chinese tourists have entered the Commonwealth. During that period, there have been approximately one dozen incidents of Chinese tourists overstaying and zero incidents of Russian tourists overstaying.

In 2007, Russian and Chinese tourists accounted for over one-tenth of total visitor arrivals and nearly a fifth of visitor expenditures in the Commonwealth, the resolution added.

Under current local rules, tourists from Russia and China have access to the CNMI without a visa. However, new immigration rules could impose mainland U.S. visa restrictions on these travelers, a prospect that threatens to stunt the growth of these emerging tourism markets.

Yet the joint visa waiver program, which allow nationals of designated countries to enter Guam and the Northern Marianas without a U.S. visa, could provide a solution to these concerns. The Department of Homeland Security is poised to publish a list of the countries approved for the waivers by Nov. 4, 2008.

Creationism museum plans on hold

By STEFAN SEBASTIAN
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BUSINESS EDITOR

A controversial organization's bid to build a museum devoted to creationism on Saipan appears for now to be on hold due to a need for funding and land for the project, according to a spokesman.

In a statement, David Crandall of the group Answers in Genesis said that building a museum on creationism—the belief that the biblical account of the Earth's origins is literal truth—in the CNMI is still on the group's agenda.

"Unfortunately, at this time no progress has been made of this project," Crandall said. "We are certainly hopeful that the necessary funding and location for such a project will become a reality."

Last year, representatives of Answers in Genesis met with Gov. Benigno Fitial to talk about the prospect of Saipan serving as a site for a creationism museum.

Answers in Genesis is a non-profit Christian organization that promotes the ideas of so-called "young earth creationism." Founded in 1980 as the Creation Science Foundation, the group largely rejects the consensus views of the world's scientific community on subjects like paleontology, geology and evolutionary biology, favoring instead a series of hypotheses that its leaders and supporters claim are valid to back theological views linked to the Book of Genesis.

For example, materials produced by the group suggest that dinosaurs roamed the Earth in the same era as humankind, that the Grand Canyon was carved by the global flood described in the Old Testament and that the Earth—contrary to scientific estimates that place its age at around 4.5 billion years—is less than 10,000 years old, views that the group has said are supported by scriptural passages.

Answers in Genesis previously funded the 70,000 square foot Creation Museum in Petersburg, Kentucky, which features displays detailing an account of the universe's history drawn from the Bible. The museum, opened in 2007, attracted 500,000 visitors within its first nine months of operation, the group has said.

The scientific community has long criticized Answers in Genesis and organizations like it, however, for misinforming the public about science.

In a 2007 statement that was signed by more than 800 scientists after the opening of the Creation Museum, the National Center for Science Education said that students "who accept this material as scientifically valid are unlikely to succeed in science courses at the college level. These students will need remedial instruction in the nature of science, as well as in the specific areas of science misrepresented by Answers in Genesis."

Torres blasts proposed gambling rules

By STEFAN SEBASTIAN
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BUSINESS EDITOR

Rep. Stanley Torres (R-Saipan), in a letter to CNMI Attorney General Matthew Gregory, blasted language in a series of proposed changes to gambling regulations that he says could bar the local Rotary Club from holding its Las Vegas Night fundraisers.

"The proposed changes give the impression that they were made to enable the government to reach at funds that otherwise would have been put towards a charitable endeavor," Torres writes.

Taking issue, for example, with one passage of the proposal that appears to limit charitable groups to holding only one gambling related fundraising event each year, Torres notes that the Rotary Club hosts Las Vegas Night three times annually and calls on the Attorney General's Office to resolve the problem.

Torres points to several other passages in the proposal that he says suggest the government is trying to impose added burdens on the Rotary Club and similar charitable groups, adding that such rules should be excluded or that charities should be given special consideration.

Moreover, he notes calls on the attorney general to allow charitable groups to be present when government staff count chips during gambling fundraisers.

"The organization has a right to ensure that the government is not cheating them and the community," he says. "This is only fair, considering that the tone of these proposed languages (sic) is one of non-trust of charitable organizations."

A former Rotary Club president, Torres says it appears the proposed regulations "are made to adversely affect the organization's Las Vegas Nights" and urges the government to establish a grandfather clause that would exempt the club and similar groups.

In an interview, Gregory noted that his office welcomes comments from the public on the proposed changes to the rules and would consider Torres' letter. Gregory had not yet seen the letter at press time.

"We can promise that we will take all comments into account," he said.

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Grey: Local officers' careers will be wiped out

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The federalization law will wipe out the careers of local immigration officers, according to Division of Immigration Services director Melvin Grey.

In an interview with *Saipan Tribune* yesterday, Grey said that Immigration officers and personnel are very concerned because of their uncertain future under the federalization law.

Immigration Services has a total of 72 officers and staff on Saipan, Rota, and Tinian.

"Some of them have as much as almost 30 years. A lot of them have around 14, 15 years. They invested in one career-specialty. And this law has wiped out their career," Grey said.

The director said he could imagine the officers' uncertainty, considering that there has been no promise of jobs for them under the federal setup.

These officers, Grey said, have nothing to fall back on because of the reduction of government's workforce and lack of positions.

Grey has been serving as Immigrations director since February 2006. He said he would stick with Gov. Benigno R. Fitial as long as Fitial needs his services.

"When the federal comes in, I don't expect any job offers for me. I will just be retiring," he said, smiling.

In a recent presentation, Howard Willens, the governor's special legal counsel, disclosed that under the federalization law, 132 Labor and Immigration personnel would lose their jobs.

Willens pointed out that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security requires U.S.-based training for its personnel and that no such training is available here until June 2009. The training, he said, takes nine to 12 months if DHS elects to provide it.

He said the ripple effect from this jobs loss are further out-migration from CNMI, loss of tax revenues, and loss of consumer demand.

On the loss of 52 jobs at the Department of Labor, Willens said DHS might utilize some current Labor employees, but that they have not yet considered this option in any detail. He expects higher paid federal workers to move to Saipan.

During the presentation, Willens tried to convince the Legislature to provide funding of about $400,000 in an eight-month period that he said the administration will need to pursue the litigation against the federalization law.

'Practice courtesy stop during power outages'

Capt. Dolores San Nicolas, the acting Department of Public Safety Commissioner, urged motorists yesterday to cooperate during outages by practicing courtesy stop at traffic intersections.

San Nicolas said the department is trying its best to monitor major traffic intersections when there is no power to make sure that everybody is safe on the streets.

"But at the same time, we ask the public's cooperation to please practice the courtesy stop by giving each other courtesy to safely transit when there's an outage," she said.

She also explained that when it rains, no officers will be standing in the middle of intersections during outages.

"It is very dangerous to put an officer in the middle of the road because you cannot control a heavy equipment coming to a stop. It is very hard when it is slippery and if an officer is out there, he will be hit right in the middle at a three-stop sign area," San Nicolas said.

"Again, we ask the public's cooperation to please cooperate and do courtesy stops until such time the power is back to normal," she said.

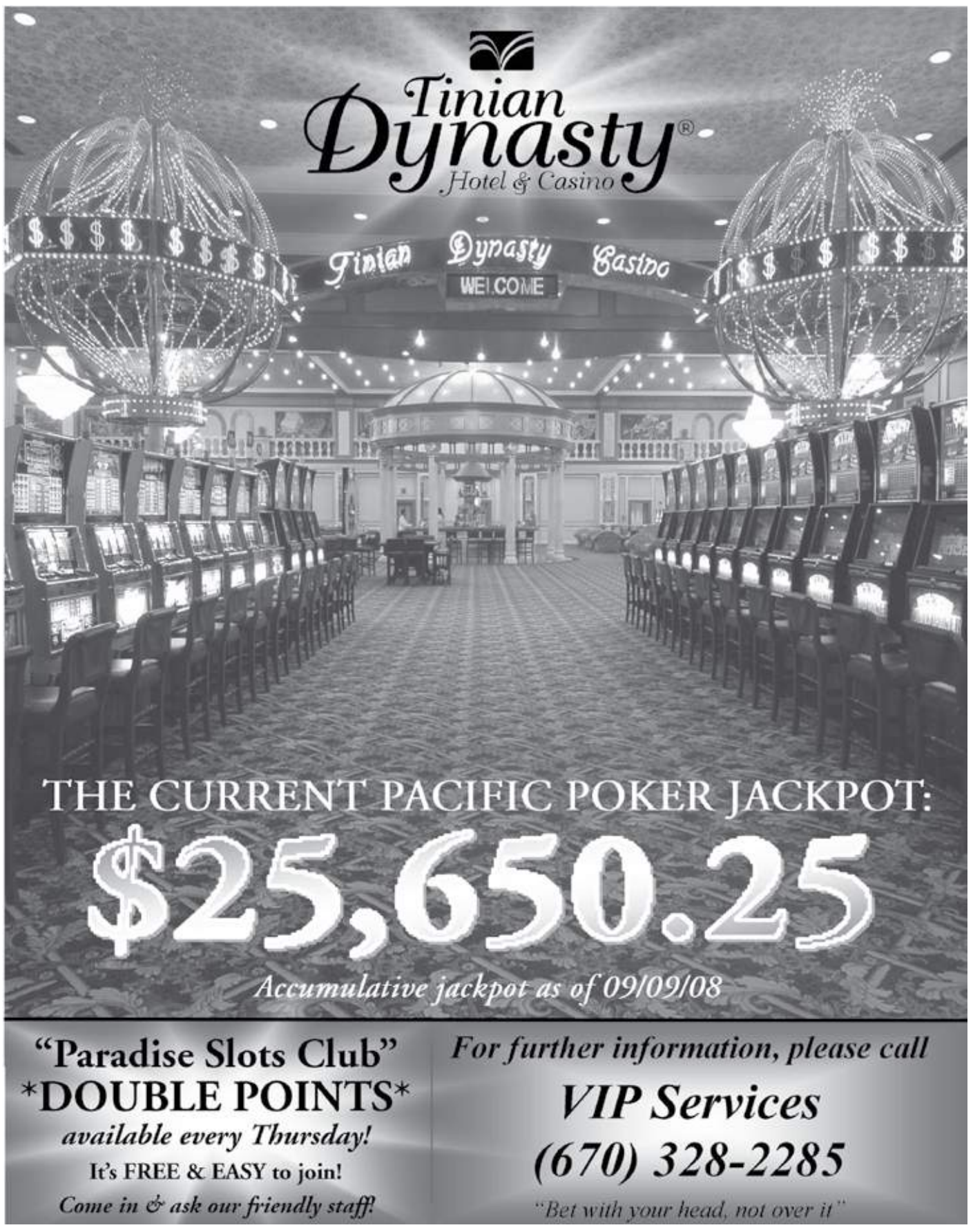
In the meantime, she said, police officers will be out monitoring intersections and making sure that everybody is safe during the transition time. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

CRIME OF THE WEEK

Theft of diesel fuel

Crime Stoppers is asking the community for information on the individual(s) involved in the theft of 60 gallons of diesel from two tractors at the Saipan Mayor's Office Field Operations Shop located in Lower Base. Based on preliminary investigation, the police were notified about the incident on Friday, Sept. 5, 2008, at 8:59am. According to a witness, 60 gallons of diesel from two tractors (Govt. #17-49 and Govt. #36-02) were stolen. Police also learned that the western chain link fence near the compound was cut about three feet in length. The area was last secured on Thursday, Sept. 4, 2008, at 4:30pm.

Anyone having information about these crimes, please call the Crime Stoppers hotline at 234-7272. Crime Stoppers pays cash rewards up to $1,000 for information leading to an arrest. Caller ID is not used. All calls remain anonymous. ***(Crime Stoppers)***



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Pacific Winds to begin 15th season

The Saipan Pacific Winds, a local music group, announces that it will be starting rehearsals for its 15th season this Sept. 15, Monday, from 6pm to 8pm, at the Saipan Southern High School Band Room. All interested musicians may attend or contact Will DeWitt at 235-1087 or 237-3722 for more information. ***(PR)***

CK beach cleanup today

The Beautify CNMI! has scheduled a cleanup today, Sept. 11 (Patriot's Day), on the beach fronting the Aquarius Hotel in Chalan Kanoa. "We will be joined by a group of students from Japan. We will meet at 8am on the beach out back. Bring water and a friend," said coordinator Angello Villagomez in an e-mail. ***(PR)***

Meeting for class action lawsuit

There will be a meeting for those who submitted a copy of their unpaid administrative orders this Sept. 13, 2008, 6pm at the Amphitheater of the American Memorial Park. Lawyer Robert Myers Jr. is expected to be there to discuss the details of the planned class action lawsuit to pursue collection from the bonding companies.

If you have not submitted and you want to be part of this class action, you may also attend the meeting. Please bring a copy of your administrative order, which should be issued within six years to Sept. 30, 2008.

For more information, e-mail Irene Tantiado at irenebdi@yahoo.com or call 285 7717 after 5pm.

Those attending are requested to come on time. ***(PR)***

United Workers Movement, NMI induction, fellowship

The United Workers Movement, NMI is holding an induction for its first set of officers and fellowship on Sept. 14, 2008 at the Minatchom Atdao Pavilion in Susupe. There will be parlor games for children starting at 2pm. Program is set at 3pm. Dinner and fellowship will commence after the program.

All workers, resident and foreign national, are invited to join this gathering.

For more details, email Irene Tantiado at irenebdi@yahoo.com or call 285 7717 after 5pm or Jane Curioso at janetcurioso398@yahoo.com. ***(PR)***

Casting call for play

Come one! Come all! Come to a casting call this Saturday and Sunday, 1pm-5pm at Marianas High School room 101-D. CNMI Friends of the Arts will be holding auditions for Neil Simon's *The Good Doctor.*

Simon, who is best known for *The Odd Couple*, wrote *The Good Doctor* as a series of scenes and the skits in the comedic style of Anton Chekhov.

For more information, call Alexa Conner at 285-9544. There are parts for everyone, young and old, but please don't be younger then 16 or older then 109. ***(PR)***

Council obtains a grant to study Chamorro language

The NMI Council for the Humanities has been awarded a grant from the National Science Foundation for a three-year collaborative project to study and help preserve the Chamorro language.

The project will be co-directed by retired educator and former Humanities Council board chair Dr. Elizabeth D. Rechebei and Dr. Sandra Chung, professor of linguistics at the University of California at Santa Cruz. They will work with the Chamorro community in the Commonwealth to significantly upgrade the documentation of the language.

Chung

Dr. Rechebei will supervise a working group that will revise the existing Chamorro-English Dictionary and videotape the life histories of Chamorro elders. Dr. Chung will prepare a Chamorro reference grammar and conduct workshops on descriptive linguistics for members of the working group.

Total funds awarded for the three-year collaborative project are $300,000, of which approximately $285,000 will go to the Council to support work in the Northern Marianas. The remainder will go to the University of California at Santa Cruz.

The grammar, revised dictionary, and oral histories—in video and print formats—will provide a highly detailed, accessible record of the Chamorro language for future generations.

The completed project will also serve as a valuable reference for the development of the next generation of Chamorro bilingual education materials—contributing to the teaching and learning of the language—which Rechebei and Chung said could make a critical difference to its long-term survival. ***(PR)***

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Private First Class Francisco Deleon Guerrero for completing Advance Individual Training in Fort Lee, Virginia. Prior to AIT, Deleon Guerrero also completed his Basic Training in Fort Jackson, South Carolina. He is the son of Sa and the late Francisco DeleonGuerrero, better known as Kiko Debu. He joins the many from our islands who have taken up the honor to represent the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in America's fight for freedom.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CAO MEETING

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial meets with Carolinian Affairs executive assistant Angelica Iginoef-Mangarero and members of the Carolinian Affairs Advisory Committee on Sept. 4, 2008, at the Office of the Governor. The meeting included discussions on federalization, the proposed marine monument, and use of public land at the Carolinian Affairs Office. Pictured from left are, front row, Millie Rabauliman-Faisao, Fitial, Iginoef-Mangarero, and visitor Issac Anderson. Second row, Pat Rabauliman, Sid Seman, Rosa Laniyo, Melvin Faisao, Maggie Olopai Taitano, David Omar, and Felicidad Ogumoro. Back row, Jesus Elameto, Manny Rabauliman, Vincent Rabauliman, and Vivian Odoshi. The meeting also updated the governor on the new CAO Oceansite Market, open to the public on Wednesdays from 5pm to 9:30pm. at the Carolinian Utt in Garapan.

Zoning to hold workshops series

The local zoning office is gearing up to host a series of workshops to educate the public on zoning regulations, the office said in a statement issued today.

Zoning administrator Steve Tilley said the workshops—to be held at the Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe—will focus on key issues like applying for zoning permits, signage rules and new regulations on adult businesses. The workshops, he added, could be of particular value to builders, government agencies, business people and anyone with nonconforming buildings, signs or activities on their properties.

The workshops will begin Sept. 16, with a talk on local zoning rules, followed by a session on applications, forms and zoning office processes, Tilley said. On Sept. 17, the agenda will address adult business rules and signage.

The workshops will begin at 9am and continue until 11:30am. Participants will get a color zoning map of Saipan and informational handouts.

To reserve space, call the Zoning Office at 234-9661. ***(Stefan Sebastian)***

Democracy Considered
A We the People Grant Project from the NMI Council for the Humanities
Join a panel of political, business and community leaders to discuss
Federalization: An Agent of Preserving or Accelerating Demise of Local Culture?
September 16, 2008
7:00pm-8:30pm
American Memorial Park Auditorium
Free Admission
Participate by attending event, calling in, or send emails to taroleafgroup@gmail.com.
The discussion is not a debate about the merits of federalization, but rather an insightful discussion about the impact — direct or indirect—that federalization will have on local culture.
Common wisdom holds that globalization is inevitable as a result of (and convergence of) the widespread use of the internet, the ease of travel restrictions around the world, the advancement of technology, an economy that commands an international supply chain, and other tools—or agents—of this great international amalgamation.
The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands is certainly not immune to what is happening in the global arena. Residents need only to look at the meteoric rise of the price of gasoline to see how events in other parts of the world are impacting life here.
Given all these, what of the local culture? As the CNMI becomes more a part of a larger structure, how will local culture be impacted? And more specifically, given the agents of change mentioned above, what role would the recent federalization of labor and immigration play?
As the CNMI becomes more a part of the bigger U.S. family, could federalization be the saving grace of local culture? Or, could it unlock the final floodgate that would accelerate the demise of the local culture as we know it?
For more information, please email at taroleafgroup@gmail.com.
taro leaf
"From Many, One: Exploring Democracy in a Multi-Cultural Commonwealth."
"This project was supported by funding received from the National Endowment for the Humanities and awarded by the Northern Mariana Islands Council for the Humanities. Any views, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in this project are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities or the Northern Mariana Islands Council for the Humanities."

PTI launches 2-1-1 feature for NMI

CNMI residents now have a dedicated access line for weather updates at their fingertips. Just by dialing 2-1-1 on any landline phone or cellular phone, callers immediately hear an up-to-date recording of the latest daily and weekly weather forecasts at no additional cost.

2-1-1 was first launched by United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta in 1997 for the purpose of providing callers with information regarding community and volunteer services for everyday needs or in times of crisis.

According to Genevieve Miller, meteorologist-in-charge at the NOAA weather forecast office in Guam, "such service existed since the early '80s, but it wasn't until Nov .1, 2005, that the 8-1-1 was switched to 2-1-1 to be in compliance with an FCC mandate." She explains that the recording is directly from their NOAA Weather Radio base station, which is located at their Tiyan office and covers the Marianas region.

The CNMI now joins more than 30 states including the District of Columbia in having a 2-1-1 center. While services offered varies for each state and community, the 2-1-1 line for the CNMI will primarily be used for weather updates, safety tips and real time information during and after a storm or a tsunami warning.

All CNMI residents "will get the most current positions of the tropical cyclone, information about the cyclone, information on the effects to the islands and emergency information that the CNMI Emergency Management Office will provide to protect life and property," said Miller.

In order to ensure that all CNMI residents could benefit from 2-1-1 services, PTI approached IConnect and SaipanCell who both agreed to also offer the service at no charge.

"Such joint efforts from all the major players in the telecommunication industry only proves our commitment in providing quality and reliable communication and at the same time acting in the best interest of the community by being socially responsible," states Kathryn Barry, Regional Marketing Manager of PTI.

"I would like to thank IConnect and SaipanCell for joining PTI in keeping the CNMI up-to-date," added Barry.

For more information, you may log on to http://www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/ or call 682-4PTI. ***(PTI)***

PUBLIC NOTICE

E-MAIL ADDRESSES FOR INQUIRIES TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

In order to better serve the public the Department of Labor has discontinued the use of the Temporary Exit Notice. Persons holding entry permits from the Commonwealth that allow entry and exit for vacation, home leave, medical referral, or other purposes are no longer required to provide a Temporary Exit Notice. No one holding this kind of entry permit who exits the Commonwealth for a temporary stay in another jurisdiction and wishes to return to the Commonwealth will be adversely affected by the federalization cap. The Labor Department has an alternative means of assuring that every person holding this kind of entry permit will be re-admitted when they return to the Commonwealth.

The Department thanks those who patiently provided the temporary exit notices. That helped the Commonwealth comply with federal law quickly and effectively on a temporary basis. With new methods, and the Department's better automation capabilities, this temporary measure is no longer needed.

PUBLIC NOTICE

E-MAIL ADDRESSES FOR INQUIRIES TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

In order to better serve the public and to avoid waits or call-backs on the telephone system, the Department of Labor has established mailboxes on the government e-mail system for the most common inquiries. If you post your inquiry to one of these mailboxes, it will be answered promptly by a Department of Labor employee with responsibility for the area covered by your inquiry. You may call the Department of Labor on the established phone numbers if you prefer.

Employment Services

employservices@cnmi-gov.net

Please use this e-mail address for questions about JVAs, job openings, resumes, or services to persons looking for work. This e-mail address may not be used for submitting required documents to Employment Services.

Labor Processing

laborprocessing@cnmi-gov.net

Please use this e-mail address for questions about the status of initial applications, renewal applications, or transfer applications; or questions about Labor Processing forms posted on the website. This e-mail address may not be used for submitting required documents to Labor Processing.

Labor Enforcement

labor enforcement@cnmi-gov.net

Please use this e-mail address for questions about the status of repatriation, investigations, or other enforcement processes or to report illegal activities. This e-mail address may not be used for submitting required documents to Labor Processing

Administrative Hearing Office

laborhearingoffice@cnmi-gov.net

Please use this e-mail address for questions about the issuance of orders or receipt of payments. This e-mail address may not be used for any kind of notice to the Hearing Office, for any requests for orders by the Hearing Office such as extensions of time, or for submitting required documents to the Hearing Office.

Bridge Capital opens bank in Cambodia

Bridge Capital, LLC, a financial services company with headquarters in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, announced yesterday the opening of Angkor Capital Bank, a full service commercial bank in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

Angkor Capital Bank is strategically located in the capital city of Cambodia with an estimated population of 2 million. The country has a total population of 16 million as of 2007. Operating from a modern glass-clad five-story building on the prestigious Norodrom Boulevard, the bank is the first to be invested in by American shareholders and offers a totally new, American-style banking experience. The bank is headed by Alex Ng, a Malaysian who is the former general manager for Cambodian Public Bank, one of the top three banks currently operating in the country. He is assisted by four other experienced managers and 19 additional staff members.

The bank will provide deposits, remittances, and loans to Cambodians, non-governmental organizations, and expatriate individuals and companies currently having investments in the country. It will specialize in targeting customers from the tourism, manufacturing, and agricultural industries which are the current economic growth engines of the country.

Angkor Capital Bank aims to open branches in all major provinces of the country in the near future to ensure better coverage and more efficient services. ***(PR)***

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

September 11, 2000

Saipan braces for cleanup

Tropical storm Saomai left Saipan Friday, causing major ruins to vegetation and roads due to heavy downpour of rain that gripped the entire island. While declaring the islands safe from the recent storm, Emergency Management Office Director Greg A. Deleon Guerrero said the cleanup of washed-out roads should now be a priority in order to restore road safety for motorists.

CPA owes signatory airlines $400K

The Commonwealth Ports Authority owes CNMI signatory airlines close to $400,000 in total credits for the payments they have made between March and June 2000, when airport departure fee was raised to $8.00 per passenger which the agency has retroactively rolled back to $5.79. A financial analysis report prepared by consultant Rex I. Palacios disclosed that as of June 30, 2000, rollback credits owed by CPA to international airlines amount to $385,676, and about $10,500 to commuter carriers.

Trade associations oppose bill vs. NMI

The National Retail Association as well as three other trade associations in the United States have backed efforts by the CNMI government to oppose legislation seeking to strip the islands of its trade privileges, according to House Floor Leader Oscar M. Babauta. These business groups have lobbied the U.S. Congress against enacting S. 922 and HR 1621 which would subject products made in the Commonwealth to import duties and quotas.

September 11, 2001

Japan recession chokes NMI tourism

A three-pronged external force stalled the Commonwealth's once thriving travel industry, which recently underwent a major transition -- from rapid growth to rapid decline. A comprehensive economic report prepared by Wali Osman of the Bank of Hawaii detailed the downfall of the CNMI's tourism sector, from the largest revenue-generating business activity to a heavily knocked-out industry.

Suicide prevention is everybody's business

Teenagers show their pain and anger superficially. They tend to run away, violate the law and do practically everything to capture attention -- even if it means trying to take their own lives. Reports prepared by the Department of Public Safety disclosed an alarming trend in suicide cases among the Commonwealth's young populace.

Marijuana plantation discovered on Tinian

Operatives have scored one of the biggest drug bust in the CNMI when it discovered a marijuana plantation at the northern part of Tinian. The discovery was made by the Department of Public Safety on Tinian, said chief government prosecutor Kevin Lynch.

September 11, 2002

Sept. 11, 2001: A year after

The Northern Marianas was just starting to crawl out of the devastating impacts of the Asian currency crisis when it was hit by a much larger catastrophe that forever changed the landscape of the world's air transportation industry: the simultaneous-almost synchronized-crash attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington DC. The Commonwealth's economic agony appeared infinitesimal side by side with the world's gargantuan financial affliction caused by the dramatic slowdown in air travel, considering that the perpetrators of the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks sowed terror by crashing four commercial aircraft onto some of America's structural pride.

NMI reminisces events of 9/11

Exactly one year ago, CNMI residents were glued to their television screens watching what used to be unimaginable of America's might: The twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York--symbol of the nation's economic activity--collapsing after being struck by terrorist-hijacked planes; and the Pentagon, symbol of the United States' military might, razing in fire. Thousands of people were killed-some jumped to death from high floors of the towers.

Joeten's Best Buys of the Week!

September 11, thru September 17, 2008

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25% off

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
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EDITORIAL

Mr. Paulson's bailout

In placing troubled mortgage giants Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac under federal control, Treasury Secretary Henry M. Paulson Jr. did what he had to do, and he did it pretty well.

The two companies are too big to be allowed to fail. They own or guarantee more than half of the $12 trillion mortgage market. Both have been hemorrhaging cash for months and were less and less able to perform their ostensible function: to hold mortgage interest rates down. And they were headed toward insolvency, which could have brought on the collapse of the U.S. mortgage market, if not the entire financial system. Among other things, Mr. Paulson's plan calls for the companies to continue buying mortgage-backed securities through 2009, thus perpetuating the tension between their financial safety and soundness, on the one hand, and their housing support mission on the other. But at least government-appointed managers will be in charge, acting on behalf of risk-averse taxpayers rather than profit-hungry shareholders. The bailout would have cost much more if Mr. Paulson had waited.

The next step is to restructure the companies so that something like this does not happen again. Mr. Paulson's plan doesn't say how to do that, but it does give the next Congress and president time to take on the job and incentives to do so by the end of 2009. If they don't, the firms will have to start shrinking their portfolios and paying the Treasury a fee for their taxpayer guarantee. In other words, Mr. Paulson has tried to prevent an actual collapse of Fannie and Freddie from dominating the rest of the election campaign—while putting both candidates on notice that permanent reform must be one of the next administration's first items of business.

We don't pretend to know the precise shape that change should take. But certain principles are clear. First, there must be no resurrection of the old "government-sponsored enterprise" model, with its implicit, widely assumed promise of government support. Our sense is that the complex, risky business of securitizing mortgage debt should be left to the private sector, under appropriately tight government regulation.

Second, the restructuring of Fannie and Freddie should take the wider needs of the economy and the environment into account. The firms were launched in an era when homeownership rates were far lower than they are today. Now two-thirds of all households own their dwellings, and sprawl, traffic and global warming are major concerns. In addition to whatever lift they get from Fannie and Freddie, homeowners benefit from a mortgage interest tax deduction, which is not capped to exclude wealthy buyers of expensive homes. Meanwhile, poor families looking for help with their rent often have to wait for years. The Fannie-Freddie collapse is a reminder that housing subsidies, if any, should be as transparent—and as carefully targeted to those in need—as possible. This bailout is a sad and expensive necessity for the U.S. economy. It must become an opportunity to rethink not only the future form and function of two failed companies but also U.S. housing policy as a whole.

(c) 2008, The Washington Post

Where's the BEEF?

By RIK and JANEL VILLEGAS
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Rik is a business instructor at NMC and Janel is a partner with BizResults, LLC (www.bizresults.org). They can be contacted at biz_results@yahoo.com.

A 1984 Wendy's television commercial featured 81-year-old character actress Clara Peller as a disgruntled customer visiting a competitor's fast-food restaurant. After seeing a small hamburger in the middle of two large buns, she screeched her famous line: "Where's the beef?"

It became an instant catch phrase that was used whenever someone questioned the substance of an idea, product, or event. The beef represents the real meat, or value that is desired by people. Your customers might consider the same phrase that Clara Peller immortalized when they question what they are really getting for their money.

You see, customers go through a subconscious evaluation that weighs what they got over what it cost. This GOT/COST ratio determines the value they received from doing business with you. Your customers have certain expectations when they consider making a purchase. These expectations could be considered their total value package. They will engage in mental gymnastics, weighing the value of your goods, services, or their overall experience against the money you require to acquire it. The combined tangible and intangible features and benefits of the product must outweigh the value of the money in their pocket in order for a purchase to take place.

COST refers not only to the price, but also to such things as the time, difficulty, emotional effort, and other intangible risk factors that are part of the price.

The GOT side of the ratio is not just the product or service itself, but a lot of other intangibles that are important to the customer. Customers don't just buy your goods and services; they want a solution to a problem, to alleviate some discomfort, or to satisfy a desire. The GOT characteristics can be summarized by the "BEEF", which is an acronym for: Better, Economical, Easier, and Faster. Let's take a closer look at each of these characteristics so you can identify the unique value you offer your customers when compared to the competition.

Better (Quality): This can include the after-sales service, craftsmanship, durability, physical attractiveness, package design, performance, or reliability. It may even refer to the degree of confidentiality, how much you educate the customer to the value of the product, or its entertainment value. Quality may be reinforced by a strong guarantee or a high resale value.

The customer ultimately determines quality, and you should understand the specific characteristics that customers use to evaluate the quality of your product. In what ways is your product or service better than the competition? What are you doing to ensure that your goods and services remain better now and in the future?

Economical (Cheaper or More): This can refer to either paying less for similar items your competition sells, or getting more for the same price. "More" can refer to accessories or premiums that come along with the purchase of an item. People are always looking for a good deal.

Easier (Convenience): Convenience means that buying from you requires less physical or emotional effort. It can also refer to compatibility, comparability, or availability. By giving greater personal attention, being more flexible, or offering easier payment terms you make it easier for the customer to take your product home.

Good customer service makes the buying experience for your customers better because you make it more convenient for them by paying closer attention to details, being friendly, or ensuring that your product is user-friendly. A similar product of your competitor could be sold in a smaller, more portable package that makes it easier and more convenient for your customers.

Faster (Service or Speed): Typically, you can charge more than the competition because you are able to deliver the product faster. Do you operate more efficiently or save the customer time? This is what differentiated Domino's Pizza and Federal Express from their competition.

You can usually combine two or more of the BEEF elements to add much greater value to your customers. Once you determine what they really want, you can customize your products to meet your customers' specific needs. Ultimately, the customer wants a result that makes them feel better physically, emotionally, or spiritually. If the result they desire satisfies and reinforces their values, makes them feel better, and is more valuable to them, then they'll be willing to pay well for what you sell. The more BEEF you can deliver, the more bread (slang for money) your customer will lay on you. So, where's your BEEF?

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, Century Insurance Building, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

A Marianas Trench Marine Monument: The year is 2029

By CHUCK SAYON
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Chuck Sayon is currently the interim executive director of the Mariana Islands Nature Alliance (http://www.minapacific.org) and is a former American Memorial Park manager from 1996 to 2006.

In early June of this year, a presentation was given by Dr. Tom Iverson of the University of Guam regarding an economic study on the creation of a marine national monument. The projections and findings were model scenarios of what a Marianas Trench Marine National Monument would add to the local economy, so to make it more tacit and real, I pulled out an article that I wrote in 1999. It was about American Memorial Park. Appearing in the *Saipan Tribune*, it was about the socio-economic benefits and interests of AMP. The AMP was created as part of the Commonwealth Covenant agreement in 1978. In 1999, AMP was just over 20 years old; today in 2008 these figures are different. BUT, with that in mind, a hypothetical comparison letter follows in the year 2029.

Business as usual for American Memorial Park

(Originally published in 1999 in the *Saipan Tribune*)

America's National Park Service system. The name conjures up images such as Yosemite, the Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, Hawaii Volcanoes, and the Statue of Liberty. Now think of the communities that surround these tourist destinations, businesses that support the tourist industries around these parks, such as lodging, tour guides, car rentals, and restaurants. These are high profile, but also in service to the Parks' needs are construction, recycling, and trash pick-up. Well, American Memorial Park is no different.

Situated on 133 acres (54 hectares) of land along the western side of Saipan, the Park commemorates those who fought in the Marianas campaign of World War II. The Park's concept of a "living memorial" offers activities enjoyed over half a century ago by American service men and women. Visitors to the Park can enjoy similar activities today, including water sports, tennis, softball, jogging and bicycling. Bordering the Park is Micro Beach, one of Saipan's finest white sand beaches, beckoning windsurfers, snorkelers, sunbathers and picnickers. A photographer's fancy, Micro Beach provides a breathtaking view of Managaha Island and dramatic evening sunsets. The park has a 1.5-mile walking path along its scenic and historic length. For the tennis enthusiast, the Park offers four tennis courts with night lighting for evening sets. The Park's modern 1,200-seat Amphitheater is a popular stage for a wide variety of local events such as the annual Liberation Day Celebration, arts and craft festivals, concerts, and graduations. The local government operates a public marina, which is integrated within American Memorial Park.

At face value, the park is an important recreational facility for both the local population and an important gateway for tourists wanting to enjoy marine related activity. Recreation easily identifies the direct benefits to community, but does one realize the important indirect benefits to businesses and the local economy. With a projected Fiscal Year 2000 American Memorial Park budget of approximately ¾ million dollar budget, this translates into a staff payroll of approximately $200,000, and with the rest of the expenditures going to construction and maintenance projects. Federal salaries earned by Park staff are not earmarked for overseas remittance, but are spent locally for supporting the employees' families and home infrastructure. With over ½ million dollar expenditures for construction and maintenance, local businesses too benefit from having a National Park in their back yard. Let's look at other indirect economic yet important benefits to the local business community. The Microbeach section of AMP is one of the few centrally, and easily accessible community beaches on the island of Saipan. Yearly, it is the sight of a major windsurfing regatta that draws international attention. For approximately one week a year in February, the hotels, the restaurants, the shops related to wind surfing, car rental companies - these service industries benefit from the 200 - 300 international and local participants. Also, we can mention the indirect benefit of international media coverage by ESPN for example that produce a multiplier effect on drawing attention to the CNMI. All this due to American Memorial Park being the venue for such an event. Focusing in on another American Memorial Park facility, the Tennis Court Complex. Visitor use surveys indicate that approximately 35,000 visitor "hits" or visitor use days occur per year. These free public courts are probably the main reason we have a small tennis related industry here on the island of Saipan. Tennis players spend money on tennis racquets and other related sports equipment like shoes, clothing, and refreshments. It would be safe to say that a majority of these expenditures are purchased locally. Another area to look at, the Outer Cove and Smiling Cove, the commercial and private/recreational marinas. Such facilities and their related support combine to make a large and significant impact on the CNMI economy. During the heyday of the CNMI tourist industry before the Asian economic crisis, it was estimated that there were over one million visitor use days in the marina area. One million people partaking in marine activities! These numbers include the tourists themselves as well as those employed in marine activities. Having an acceptable, functioning and well managed venue to be a gateway for tourism and the supporting industries are key to ongoing and survival of one of the key industries in the CNMI.

So in a nutshell, American Memorial Park acts as an anchor. Dependent on the Park are various recreational activities and the need for businesses to support those activities. In looking at the economic effects, the multiplier effect and those dependent on a well managed Park facility, just imagine if there were no American Memorial Park?

Now imagine if we created a Marianas Trench Marine Monument within the next year. Picture this, the year is 2029, could this be a letter you are reading in the paper?

Business as usual for the Marianas Trench Marine National Monument

America's Marine Monument Sanctuary Park system. The name conjures up images such as the Florida Keys, Hawai'i's Papahanaumokuakea Marine National Monument (the world's largest) and the Monterey Bay off the California's central coast. Now think of the communities that surround these tourist destinations. Businesses that support the tourist industries around these parks, such as lodging, tour guides, diving shops, car rentals, and restaurants. These are high profile, but also in service to the parks' needs are construction work, recycling, marine enforcement, education, food delivery and waste management and transport. Well, for the Marianas Marine National Monument there is no difference.

Situated on 115,000 square miles (2.9 million square kilometers) of ocean surrounding the three most northern islands (Maug, Asuncion, and Uracas) of the Commonwealth, the monument (the second largest of the world) preserves a large marine ecosystem habitat of rare and endemic species only found there due its association of underwater of volcanic activity and over 5 miles of ocean depth. The marine park is also a habitat to many species that once were once plentiful and are now overfished throughout the western Pacific. Visitors to the park can enjoy submarine rides to view incredible underwater geological formations, while seeing weird ghost-like creatures never imagined. Nature lovers are easily satisfied seeing birds and other land marine creatures in their natural habitat. For the more athletic and adventurous, there is scuba diving and sea kayaking.

So in a nutshell, American Memorial Park acts as an anchor. Dependent on the Park are various recreational activities and the need for businesses to support those activities. In looking at the economic effects, the multiplier effect and those dependent on a well managed Park facility, just imagine if there were no American Memorial Park?

Gateway to the marine monument is the island community of Pagan (population about 320), about 80 miles south of the monument's borders. Here you can visit with park monument's field office and small ranger station. Take time to talk to the rangers to learn more about the monument and what hazards and precautions to take while on your visit. To get to Pagan Island you can take a small plane from Saipan that flies to Pagan's short landing strip. The flight will take about an hour and is twice daily. For those with more time on their hands, you can take a boat ride that leaves two times weekly from Saipan. The park monument staff operates the boat, mainly to service monument operations in Pagan and the monument. Space on the boat is extremely limited, so call park monument headquarters in Saipan to make a reservation. The boat ride takes a full day from Saipan and rumors are that there will be a more comfortable commercial ferry operation soon. But until then, while on board enjoy your conversations with scientists, school education groups on a field trip or park staff. Also, make sure that you make a reservation at one of Pagan's three small hotels too; if you are out of luck there is a place to camp on the island. Just visit the Pagan municipal office once you're on island to get your permit. The travel up to Pagan (either by plane or boat) is a photographer's dream of deep blue oceans, other picturesque islands and an active volcano on Anatahan island. Evening and early morning times on the boat are met with spectacular sunrises and sunsets or at night catch the red angry glow of Anatahan's peak. For those who want to know more about the monument while on Saipan, visit the "state of the art" visitors center. This visitors center also serves as reservations center for lodging and boat passage to Pagan, park management headquarters, administration center and offices for visiting scientists conducting research in the monument.

At face value, the park monument is an important refuge for endangered fish species, scientific study and an exotic remote tourist destination. Ecosystem preservation and management easily identifies the direct benefits to community and Planet Earth, but does one realize the important indirect benefits to businesses and the local economy? With a projected Fiscal Year 2029 Marianas National Marine Monument budget of $12 million, this translates into a staff payroll of approximately $5 million, and with the rest of the expenditures going to construction and maintenance projects. Federal salaries earned by Park staff are spent locally for supporting the employees' families and home infrastructure. With over $7 million expenditures for construction and maintenance, local businesses too benefit from having a National Marine Monument at their doorstep. Let's look at other indirect economic yet important benefits to the local business community.

The monument's harbor facilities (built for about $5 million about 10 years ago) managed in Saipan and Pagan are easily accessible to the community for boat loading and unloading. The marine monument's plane used for patrolling by monument staff is certainly helpful in spotting illegal fishing by foreign vessels and is instrumental in any search/rescue and Pagan medical evacuation operations. The park monument went into a 50/50 cost share agreement to improve the airport runway at Pagan for a total cost of $9 million. The monument's transportation services of boats and a plane have been a stable moneymaker for the maintenance mechanics on Saipan. The construction of the monument's Saipan visitors center over 10 year's ago added $8 million to the local construction economy; the expected remodel, scheduled next year, will be at a cost of $5 million.

Many new scientific discoveries of flora and fauna, never seen before, have drawn worldwide attention in many scientific journals. Just last year, the headline-making discovery of unique bacteria (that may help in the battle against cancer) was featured in CNN. Also, what a great benefit of having these internationally acclaimed scientists and researchers teach at our local college while they are here. Plus, they are recruiting local students for employment to help in their fieldwork.

Stocks of many fish species thrive and have healthy breeding populations within the marine monument, thanks to proper management and strict regulation. Fish populations within the marine monument have been used to re-populate areas that have been over fished or re-introduced back to areas where there has been ecosystem wide habitat destruction. The marine monument has become a breeding ground for many fish species in the western Pacific Ocean. We certainly have a thriving "live" fish export industry here helping restock and re-introduce fish species back into areas where they once thrived.

So in a nutshell, the Marianas Marine National Monument acts as an anchor to the scientific community, the Commonwealth's marine education programs and the small but ever growing adventure tourist industry in Pagan. Dependent on the Park are various recreational activities, scientific companies, education programs and the need for businesses to support those activities. In looking at the economic effects, the multiplier effect and those dependent on a well managed marine park facility, just imagine if there were no Marianas Marine Monument Park?

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms. South winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with solated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲86° ▼77°	▲88° ▼77°	▲88° ▼77°	▲88° ▼77°	▲88° ▼77°

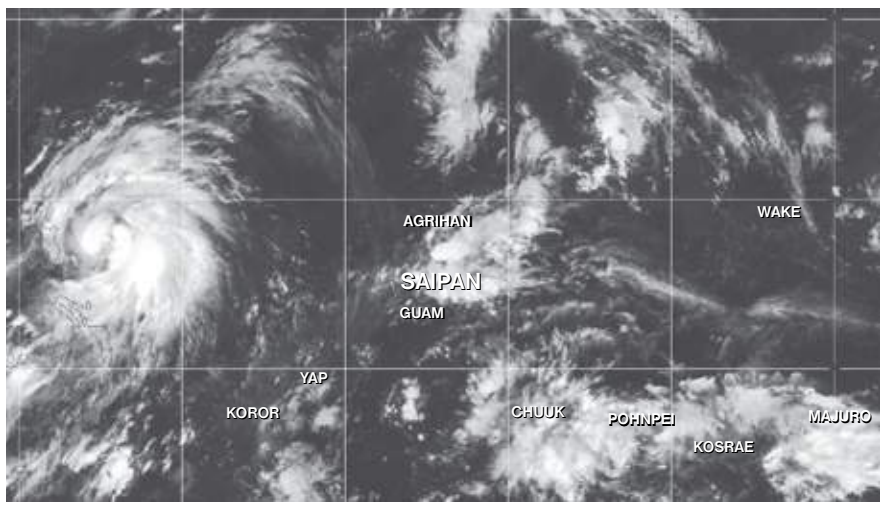
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Showers	▲85	▼77
Palau	Showers	▲84	▼78
Yap	Showers	▲86	▼77
Chuuk	Thundershowers	▲87	▼77
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	▲88	▼73
Kosrae	Showers	▲87	▼75
Majuro	Thunderstorms	▲86	▼76

Around The Globe

Auckland	Showers	▲58	▼50
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	▲86	▼59
Hong Kong	Cloudy	▲91	▼81
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	▲83	▼75
London	Showers	▲72	▼55
Los Angeles	Cloudy	▲78	▼62
Manila	Rain	▲86	▼77
Melbourne	Showers	▲67	▼52
Miami	Thundershowers	▲90	▼80
New York	Sunny	▲72	▼58
Osaka	Mostly Sunny	▲85	▼68
Paris	Rain	▲81	▼65
Pusan	Cloudy	▲84	▼71
Rome	Partly Sunny	▲88	▼66
Salem	Sunny	▲83	▼48
San Francisco	Cloudy	▲73	▼56
Seoul	Cloudy	▲80	▼66
Tokyo	Partly Sunny	▲82	▼70
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	▲76	▼65

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:30AM, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2008
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A low-level trough extends northeastward from north of Koror at 13N133E to a circulation centered west of Agrihan at 18N142E, then turns north-northeastward to beyond 25N at 145E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are occurring near the trough axis northwest of Guam and over Saipan and Agrihan within 90 miles of a line from 14N141E to 17N146E to 20N148E. Converging south winds east of the trough axis are producing scattered showers and a few thunderstorms over Minamitori Shima or north of a line from 22N150E to 20N160E. A surface trough runs northward from 1N138E to 7N140E. Converging surface winds west of the trough axis are inducing scattered showers south of Koror and Yap within 60 miles of a line from 2N134E to 6N136E to 8N140E. Convergence associated with the trough itself is causing similar conditions south of Guam but west of Chuuk between 3N and 10N from 140E to 149E. Trade-wind convergence is combining with favorable upper-level dynamics to trigger scattered showers and a few thunderstorms south of Chuuk, Pohnpei and Kwajalein but over Kosrae or south of a line from 3N147E to 5N157E to 6N170E. Mid to high level cloudiness from earlier convection is found over Majuro between 5N and 11N from 170E to 179E. An upper-level low is centered southeast of Wake Island at 17N171E. Scattered showers associated with the low are seen east of Wake between 17N and 23N from 170E to 174E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

3:17AM Today	High Tide:	1.6 Feet
10:56AM Today	Low Tide:	0.1 Feet
6:13PM Today	High Tide:	1.7 Feet
11:36PM Today	Low Tide:	1.2 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:05AM	6:22 PM
Friday	6:05AM	6:21 PM
Saturday	6:05AM	6:20 PM
Sunday	6:05AM	6:19 PM
Monday	6:06AM	6:19 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	3:27PM	2:06AM
Friday	4:09PM	3:00AM
Saturday	4:49PM	3:53AM
Sunday	5:28PM	4:45AM
Monday	6:06PM	5:38AM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

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Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF SEPTEMBER 1, 2008

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota

CO 9313	8:30am	9:05am	3,4,7

Saipan-Guam

CO9317	4:00am	4:50am	Daily
CO9597	8:30am	9:20am	1,2,5,6
CO9313	8:30am	10:00am	3,4,7 via Rota
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	Daily
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily

Saipan-Narita

NW 099	5:00am	7:30am	Daily
NW 078	8:55am	2:00pm	Daily
NW 075	4:55pm	7:25pm	Daily

Saipan-Osaka

NW 083	4:20pm	6:55pm	Daily

Saipan-Nagoya

NW 078	8:55am	11:35am	Daily

Saipan-Seoul

OZ 604	2:20am	6:00am	1
OZ 604	2:50am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 606	3:30pm	7:00pm	2,4,6,7

Saipan-Busan

OZ 608	3:50am	7:20am	1,5

Guam-Manila

CO 891	6:00am	10:30am	3 via Yap and Koror
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	5 via Koror
CO 933	7:00pm	8:40pm	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:45am	1,2,4,6,7

Saipan-Guanzhou

CZ 3008	5:00am	8:00am	2,6

Guam-Rota

CO 9598	10:15am	10:45am	1,2,6

ARRIVALS

Rota-Saipan

CO 9598	11:10am	11:45am	1,2,6

Guam-Saipan

CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	Daily
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9598	10:15am	11:45am	1,2,6 via Rota
CO9600	10:45am	11:35am	3,4,5,7
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

Narita-Saipan

NW 076	10:15am	2:50pm	Daily
NW 077	6:25pm	1:30am+1	Daily
NW 100	8:45pm	1:20am+1	Daily

Osaka-Saipan

NW 084	10:30am	3:05pm	Daily

Nagoya-Saipan

NW 077	9:00pm	1:30am+1	Daily

Seoul-Saipan

OZ 605	9:00am	2:30pm	2,4,6,7
OZ 603	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ 603	8:10pm	1:40am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6

Busan-Saipan

OZ 607	9:30pm	2:50am+1	4,7

Manila-Guam

CO 892	11:45am	8:25pm+1	3 via Koror and Yap
CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	5 via Koror
CO 934	10:55pm	4:30am+1	Daily
PR 110	10:20pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7

Guanzhou-Saipan

CZ 3007	8:00pm	4:00am+1	1,5

Rota-Guam

CO 9313	9:30am	10:00am	3,4,7

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; PR: Philippine Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CA: Air China; NW: Northwest; JO: Japan Airlines; OZ: Asiana; MU: China Eastern ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

911

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Vergara is a regular contributor to the Saipan Tribune*'s Opinion Section*

It was in the mid-'70s when a global furor was heard after India tested its first nuclear bomb. India evidently aimed its technology to counter Chinese military and political posturing along its border, and to bolster its standing against its erstwhile cousins in the Indus Valley and the Bengali deltas. India went ahead with its tests in spite of the sentiments expressed the year before in the first Peace Conference in Hiroshima.

India, then considered the sick little brown man (sic) in Asia among the members of Her Royal Majesty's Commonwealth of the British Empire, suddenly experienced a resurgence of national spirit and confidence that spurred its economy and enlivened its politics. The 99lb man in the beach flexed his muscles to join the ranks of Superman USA, which continued testing its nuclear capability after Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1946 in the northwest Pacific atolls of Bikini and Enewetak, followed by the Kremlin's tests in 1953. Forty-four nations capable of producing nuclear armaments finally had to regulate their arsenal frenzy with the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, which today still has North Korea outside of its circle of influence.

This telling of New Delhi's rediscovery of its self-confidence is to say that it is no different from the self-righteous indignation felt among not a few Islamic centers in Kabul and Islamabad, Tehran and Baghdad, Damascus and Riyadh after the twin towers of New York, symbol of the globalization of the world's economy, got rammed by two hijacked planes commandeered by forces of the al-Qaeda, and gave sudden prominence to the activities of the Talibans, Hamas, Abu Zayyaf, Hezbollah and other Moslem Liberation Fronts around the world.

European children are all too familiar with the other September 11 that was heralded since 1683 as the day Europe stopped the Ottoman Empire from entering the gates of Vienna and devouring the rest of Europe. This date also marked the turn of the tide for the followers of Mohammed's expansion to the rest of the world, culminating in the defeat of the Turks in World War I. September 11 in the minds of the followers of the Koran was a day of humiliation in the same scale as Pearl Harbor to the American mind became a day of infamy that would fuel the American spirit and spark its nascent industrial-based economy.

It is very telling of the age to which I belong that I still have a panoramic picture of the New York skyline and the World Center twin towers gracing the wall of my Social Studies class. I do not have, and probably will not care to get one if it was made available, an updated photo of the skyline where there is nothing but empty space on the spot where this symbol of global trade and commerce once stood.

It also means that if in my world view, as it is in many of my colleagues, there has been a resurgence of the human spirit symbolized by the earthrise and the moonwalk, the Luke Skywalker of our mythology, but 911.2001 and the twin towers of New York is our Darth Vader, the emergence of the sanctified bully pulpit that ironically Osama bin Laden and George W. Bush and an acquiescent America have resurrected and used to lead this nation into a quagmire of ill-conceived adventures and a defensive spirit of fear and trepidation more appropriate for the losers of a failing enterprise than the hope-filled champions of an exuberant human endeavor.

That 911 highlighted the crisis immanent in the civilizing process where Empire has been the legitimized mode of social organization, it might be instructive to notice that in the Chinese ideogram, the word for "crisis" is the paradoxical fusion of limits and possibilities. In the yin-yang of human existence is the universal essence that the ascending force of life creation is also the descending force of termination and death.

These would all be academic and just philosophical were it not too real and true in the common ground of our daily life. Even in the hallowed halls of our Legislature, we find mean streaks of character assassination and street-dirty partisanship while the flowering of openness and accountability is nipped in the bud. The practices of coercion and intimidation are commonly held in our schools where it passes for discipline and order. What would be legitimate corrective measures are turned around into forms of punishment so that even such matters as the retention of children in a grade level has proven to be 100 percent counterproductive. In the years I had been with the Public School System, I have yet to see a grade level retained child behave to improve his/her academic performance. Instead, the attitude of defiance and rebellion multiplies geometric-fold.

911 has caused us to build walls when we actually want to build bridges. While we might think the physical walls in the Mexican border and the mental ones we've instituted in the Canadian divide is distant from us in the Commonwealth, our labor pains stems from a calcifying "Us and Them" dichotomy that has suddenly emerged in sharpened definition of ideological differences, and a sudden emergence of ethnic divisiveness out of the archaic notion that there is not enough to go around so we must take care of our immediate kin first before we allow the aliens, foreigners and strangers to the common table.

It does not matter that we are talking about people who have fluffed our pillows and tended our gardens, took our children to school and prepared our meals, guarded our gates and tallied our accounts, managed our business affairs and repaired our equipment, constructed our homes and paved our roads. We've even mixed fluids with their sons and daughters, and among their offsprings run a plethora of our genes.

Alas, even in the path of simple ascension of a Commissioner of Education not only in our Commonwealth but even among our cousins in the south, the steps are littered with acrimony and dissension that the spice of civility is getting lost in the ambience of bitterness and the taste of disagreeable acidity.

The rhetoric of the culture of inclusion is pervasive in our academic literature but our political policies and cultural practices reveal otherwise. We have become masters in the art of exclusion. Even our drive for inclusion in our Special Education, unfortunately, appears to be driven more by funding compliance than by some enlightened form of human compassion and cognition of human right.

The great wall of humiliation for a significant segment of the world's population in the memory of 9/11 outside the gates of Vienna in 1683, and the great wall of separation we have built since 9/11 in 2001 not only "in the cobwebs of our global imagination," but also in the laws and regulations we have since enacted, remain a formidable contradiction in the human journey.

We are indeed living in Charles Dickens' *Tale of Two Cities* in that these are the worst of times, these are the best of times. The preponderance of the therapy of despair has overcome the siren song of hope. Dare we celebrate the eucharistic (small letter) presence of our authentic lives so that our commercial ventures are not just meant to benefit the few but toward equity for the many, that we do not fear our union organizing because it is simply taking ownership of labors' role and contribution to the whole management scheme, that we protest the absence of adequate social and economic services not to embarrass and disrespect our public officials but because we are guided by the democratic desire at participation rather than just be another instrument of partisan politics?

911 is the emergency number. Might we responsibly heed its call?

Letters to the Editor

The need for change. Now!

I wish we, the people of Tinian, could join Ed Propst and all those concerned American citizens who will be joining him at Fishing Base next week Wednesday to protest the misadministration of CUC. Unfortunately, we, the people, don't receive an unauditable allowance from the General Fund to pay our ticket to Saipan.

We, the people of Tinian, were made aware at a public hearing held here a year ago by CUC that the new power rate schedule created by CUC would be one rate for one Marianas. That means when our legislators approved the Aggreko deal, they voted to include the people of Tinian in paying for the $500,000-a-month addition to our power bills, even though the cost of fixing the power system on Saipan has nothing to do with the cost of power on Tinian. Our illustrious legislators could have insisted that if they were to agree to the Aggreko deal for the sake of the people of Saipan, then Saipan would agree to take the excess 10 megawatts of power produced by the Tinian Telesource power plant and cut us free from CUC. But they did not. What they did was (surprise, surprise) nothing.

The Tinian Legislative Delegation has had the opportunity to introduce legislation to separate us from CUC and create the TUC for the last year. If they did so, our cost of electricity would be reduced to between 25-30 cents per kilowatt hour, perhaps saving some of our private businesses that are on the brink of disaster and providing more affordable electricity for all the common people who don't get an unauditable extra 60 grand a year to pay their power bills. However, that would require them to actually work.

Thank you, Ed, for all your work on behalf of the people of the CNMI. I wish more of the Legislature would wake up and realize that we, the common people of the CNMI, want change now. We don't want to wait another 15 months to take out the trash.

Don Farrell
Marpo Heights, Tinian

Who can vote to own land in the CNMI

In 2011 the CNMI will vote on the issue of land ownership. Presently only Northern Marianas Descent can own land. Furthermore the CNMI Constitution allows for only NMDs to vote on land issues. NMDs are persons born or domiciled in the Northern Marianas on or before 1950 and were Trust Territory citizens. Only persons who are U.S. citizens and are not less than 25 percent NMD or a child under 18 who is adopted by a NMD can own land in the CNMI.

What are your thoughts? Take the poll at www.camachocnmi.com.

On behalf of the chairman of the House of Representatives Committee on Natural Resources, I have placed on my website www.camachocnmi.com a poll on who can vote to own land in the CNMI. The House Natural Resources Committee will monitor the results of this poll carefully. The poll result, along with public hearings and public comments, will assist the Natural Resources Committee on formulating policies on this very important matter.

Joseph Norita Camacho
Floor Leader, House of Representatives

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Business

OPEC decides to curb overall output; prices rise

VIENNA, Austria (AP)—OPEC oil ministers agreed Wednesday to trim overall output by more than 500,000 barrels a day in a compromise meant to avoid new turmoil in crude markets while seeking to bolster falling prices.

The news sparked a rebound in oil prices. Light, sweet crude for October delivery rose $1.00 to $104.26 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

The OPEC announcement reflected OPEC efforts to cover all bases in an oil market that saw prices spike to a record high just short of $150 a barrel in July, only to shed nearly 30 percent off those peaks in subsequent months.

Oil prices had lost more ground Tuesday ahead of the OPEC decision, falling $3.08 to settle at $103.26 on the Nymex, the lowest settlement price since April 1.

An OPEC statement issued after oil ministers ended their meeting early Wednesday said the organization agreed to produce 28.8 million barrels a day. OPEC President Chakib Khelil said that quota in effect meant that member countries had agreed to cut back 520,000 barrels a day in production over the established quota.

Saudi Arabia alone accounts for more than that amount of output over its official quota—all members of the 13-nation OPEC have such formal production limits allotted to them except violence-torn Iraq. But Khelil said that the cutbacks in overproduction would apply proportionally to all OPEC members bound by quotas.

OPEC overall regularly churns out oil above the organization's overall quota, last set in November at 27.3 million barrels a day, and it remained unclear whether group members would abide by the decision to keep to their limits.

Still, the decision could have the psychological effect of steadying eroding prices at or above the $100 mark—the red line for many OPEC nations concerned about their rapid loss of revenue in recent months.

While the new production limit of 28.8 million barrels a day is above that set in November, the statement said it reflected adjustments to include new members Angola and Ecuador and excluding Iraq, as well as Indonesia, which used the Vienna meeting to announce it was suspending its full membership.

Billions to be shared by Enron shareholders

HOUSTON (AP)—Enron Corp. shareholders and investors will split about $7 billion from financial institutions accused of participating in the fraud that caused the once-mighty energy company to collapse.

The settlement amount was listed at $7.2 billion, a sum that has been accruing interest since 2002 and includes $688 million plus interest in attorneys fees.

The deal, approved late Monday by U.S. District Judge Melinda Harmon, and the attorneys fees are the largest in history in a U.S. securities fraud case.

"We're pleased that the court recognizes the tremendous amount of work, skill and determination required to overcome significant obstacles in this complicated case," said Patrick Coughlin, attorney for the regents of the University of California, the lead plaintiffs.

About 1.5 million individuals and entities will be eligible to share in the distribution under the settlement plan. The attorneys fees will go to San Diego-based Coughlin Stoia Geller Rudman & Robbins LLP, the law firm representing the university.

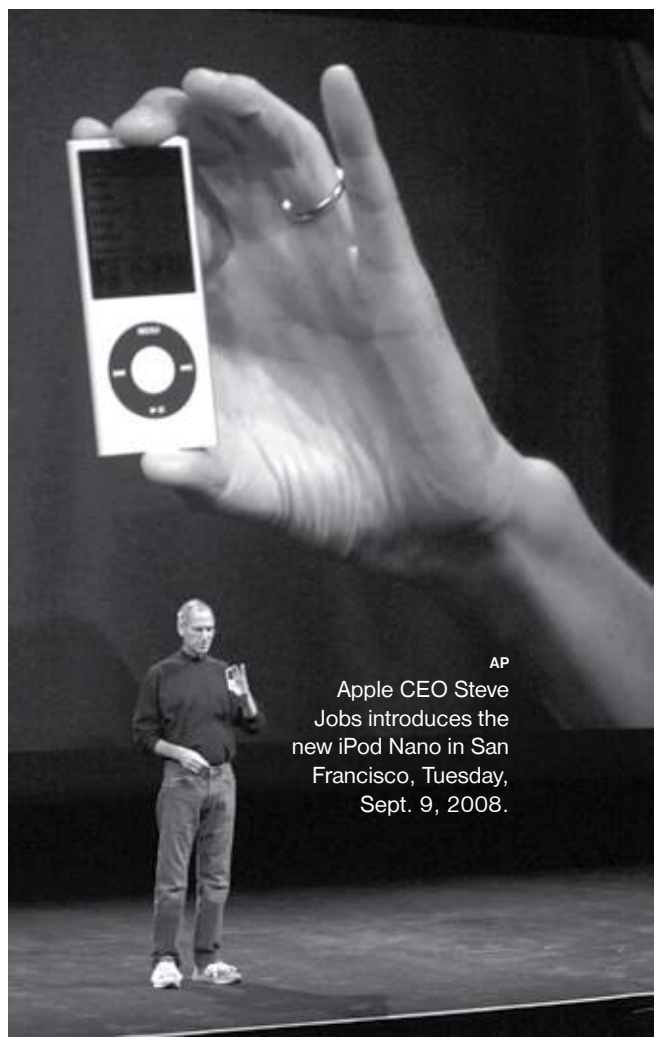
Besides the University of California, other plaintiffs who will share in the proceeds include pension plans from New York City and Hawaii, various investment firms and the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.

The distribution plan was part of a $40 billion lawsuit filed by shareholders and investors, who claim Bank of America, JPMorgan Chase & Co., Citigroup and others participated in the accounting fraud that led to Enron's downfall.

Calculating shares of the $7.2 billion will be determined by a formula that factors in such things as the stock's purchase price and the type of stock bought.

At its height, Enron's common stock sold for as much as $90 per share, before plummeting to as low as $1 right before the company declared bankruptcy.

Apple unveils new iPods but shares slip



AP
Apple CEO Steve Jobs introduces the new iPod Nano in San Francisco, Tuesday, Sept. 9, 2008.

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Apple Inc. CEO Steve Jobs took the wraps off a revamped line of iPods on Tuesday and trumpeted a truce with NBC Universal that means the TV network will begin selling programs again on iTunes.

The iPod announcements were largely expected, and investors were less than energized, sending Apple's shares down $6.24, 4 percent, to close at $151.68.

The iPod upgrades Jobs revealed Tuesday in a theater in San Francisco include two slick new Nano models, oval-shaped devices that Jobs said are the thinnest iPods Apple has ever made. They are less than a quarter-inch thick.

A $149 version comes with 8 gigabytes of memory (enough for 2,000 songs); a 16-gigabyte version (which holds 4,000 songs) is $199.

The new models acknowledge the incredible appetite for iPods—Jobs said Apple has sold 160 million iPods since their introduction in 2001, making them the runaway leader among portable music players. But Apple has to work hard to differentiate them from the iPhone, Apple's cell phone/iPod/Internet device that threatens to cannibalize some of the demand for iPods.

US airlines not planning to cut fuel surcharges

FORT WORTH, Texas (AP)—Although oil prices have dropped over the past few weeks, U.S. airlines have no immediate plans to reduce fuel surcharges that they tack on to the price of a ticket.

Most carriers have imposed several increases in their fuel surcharges - they range up to $170 per round trip in the United States and more for international flights - on top of fare hikes.

Fuel accounts for up to 40 percent of the budget at many of the biggest airlines, topping labor as their biggest single cost.

The price of oil slid Tuesday below $104 per barrel, its lowest closing price in five months.

U.S. airlines increased their fuel surcharges several times as oil roared past $100 a barrel and beyond, but they haven't reduced the fees as oil prices slid 30 percent since their mid-July peak.

On Monday, Singapore Airlines Ltd. said that it plans to cut its fuel surcharge by up to 10 percent. The carrier said the surcharge would fall to $36 from $40 for flights between Singapore and other cities in Southeast Asia, although it didn't announce any cut in surcharges on flights to the United States.

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Nation

Bush touts Iraq troop reduction, not big picture

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Bush boasts that he's bringing 8,000 troops home from Iraq by February. What he doesn't say is he'll leave office with more troops there than before last year's big military buildup and few options for shoring up the force in increasingly violent Afghanistan.

The bottom line of Bush's troop announcement on Tuesday is that the U.S. military footprint in Iraq largely will stay intact for the rest of the year when he'll pass command of the wars to his successor. Bush is sending more troops to Afghanistan, but Democrats say it's not enough.

Bush chose the measured drawdown in Iraq because he didn't want to jeopardize recent security gains. He sent in 30,000 extra troops last year to buy time for political and economic progress in Iraq, which has been slow to materialize. Military commanders tell Bush there appears to be a "degree of durability" to the security gains, but progress in Iraq remains fragile and reversible.

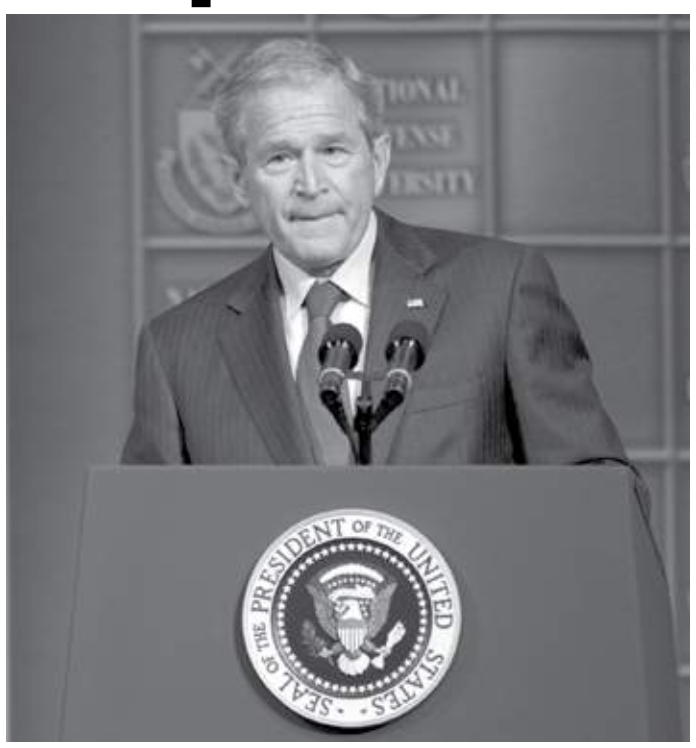
In a speech at the National Defense University, Bush emphasized the positive:

"While the enemy in Iraq is dangerous, we have seized the offensive. Iraqi forces are becoming increasingly capable of leading and winning the fight. As a result, we've been able to carry out a policy of return on success—reducing American combat forces in Iraq as conditions on the ground continue to improve."

On Wednesday, Bush is meeting in the Oval Office with Iraqi President Jalal Talabani. Tuesday afternoon, he visited severely wounded troops at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, seeing, face-to-face, the human consequences of war.

"On the one hand you see the horrors of war," he said after spending an hour with wounded soldiers. "And on the other hand you see the courage of the people who have volunteered to serve."

Bush advisers said U.S. troop withdrawals were possible because of clear, undeniable progress on the security front, paving the way for other nations to pull out their troops too. They said the 30-member coalition with forces in Iraq would shrink to a handful in the next 90 days. They're leaving it to the Iraqi government to announce who's staying and who's going.



AP

President Bush announces plans to order 8,000 more combat and support troops out of Iraq by February, Tuesday, Sept. 9, 2008, during an address at the National Defense University at Ft. McNair in Washington.

Analysis: Obama is back on defense against McCain

AMERISA VOTES

RIVERSIDE, Ohio (AP)—Democratic presidential nominee Barack Obama has found himself in a position he hasn't been in during many long months of campaigning—on defense against Republican rival John McCain.

With just over seven weeks left in the race, the candidates are running even in most polls, money and, it seems, even rank-and-file enthusiasm—all fronts where Obama had led for months.

At the same time, Iraq, the issue that anti-war Obama successfully used during the primaries, has faded to the background. The economy is voters' primary concern but, on that topic, too, McCain has made gains to start leveling the playing field.

All this, despite an election season in which the sour mood of voters and their thirst for a new direction are just a couple of the advantages for Democrats trying to recapture the White House after eight years of Republican rule.

With voters craving change and Obama offering it, McCain has started pushing hard to reclaim the reformer mantle he owned eight years ago. His running mate, Sarah Palin, has energized his conservative base while attracting droves of white women to the Arizona senator's candidacy. The GOP ticket has soaked up a great deal of attention over the last 10 days, between Palin's selection and the party's convention.

Texas officials weigh evacuations as Ike nears

McALLEN, Texas (AP)—With Hurricane Ike steaming into the Gulf of Mexico, Texas emergency officials Tuesday stood ready to order 1 million people evacuated from the impoverished Rio Grande Valley and tried to convince tens of thousands of illegal immigrants that they have less to fear from the Border Patrol than from the storm.

Emergency planning officials were meeting all day to decide if and when to announce a mandatory evacuation for coastal counties close to the Mexican border.

With forecasts showing Ike blowing ashore this weekend, authorities lined up nearly 1,000 buses in case they are needed to move out the many poor and elderly people who have no cars.

ACROSS THE NATION

More people calling suicide prevention hot line

WASHINGTON (AP)—The number of Americans calling the government's suicide prevention hot line has increased every year since its launch, say the program's staff, who attribute that to efforts to promote the number rather than a rise in people considering suicide. Last month, Americans called the hot line more than 47,000 times. In January 2005, when the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-TALK) was launched, it received just 1,500 calls, according to director Dr. John Draper. Draper says the hot line receives, on average, about a 10 percent increase of calls every month. In the past year, nearly 500,000 people have called it. "The increase in calls does not correlate to an increasing number of people who are in psychogical distress," Draper said.

New 9/11 museum building design evokes twin towers

NEW YORK (AP)—The latest design for the Sept. 11 memorial entrance pavilion has a facade that evokes the World Trade Center's twin towers, and builders still hope the memorial will open by the 10th anniversary of the terrorist attacks. The three-story, asymmetrical glass and steel building is the last piece of the 8-acre memorial plaza at ground zero, a redesign of a building first introduced as a much larger museum space three years ago. Craig Dykers, architect for the Norwegian architectural firm Snohetta, said the reflective steel facade was inspired by the World Trade Center towers. He said natural light will hit the building at different points of the day and change its appearance.

Texas appeals court stop scheduled execution

McKINNEY, Texas (AP)—Attorneys for a killer who had been scheduled to die Wednesday say he should get a new trial because his trial judge and the prosecutor admitted having a secret sexual relationship that began years before his murder convictions. Charles Dean Hood won a reprieve Tuesday, but not because of the alleged affair. The Texas Court of Criminal Appeals said it will reconsider its previous dismissal of an appeal by Hood that challenged jury instructions. The court said developments in the law regarding jury nullification instructions made reconsidering its ruling prudent. At the same time, the court dismissed claims by Hood's attorneys that he was denied a fair trial because of the alleged relationship between retired Judge Verla Sue Holland and former Collin County District Attorney Tom O'Connell. O'Connell and Holland gave depositions under a court order Hood's attorneys won on Monday.

2008
GOVERNOR'S
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AWARDS
COUNCIL FOR THE HUMANITIES NMI

CALL FOR NOMINATION

The Northern Mariana Islands Council for the Humanities is accepting nominations for the 2008 Governor's Humanities Awards. Individuals, groups and organizations may be nominated for significant contributions to the humanities in five categories:

- **Research and Publication in the Humanities**
- **Preservation of CNMI History**
- **Preservation of Traditional Cultural Practices**
- **Outstanding Humanities Teacher**
- **Lifetime Achievement in the Humanities**

Nomination forms and guidelines may be obtained at the Humanities Council's office in the Reyes Building in Dandan or downloaded from the Council's website at www.nmihumanities.org.

Nomination forms must be received by the Humanities Council on or before 4:30 p.m. on 3 October 2008. Awardees will be selected by a majority vote of the Council's board of directors.

Awards will be presented during the 2008 Governor's Humanities Awards ceremonies in October 2008. The time, date and venue of this event will be announced shortly. Please contact Council staff at 235-4785 for additional information about the 2008 Governor's Humanities Awards.

Asia

Kim Jong Il may be gravely ill

WASHINGTON (AP)—North Korean dictator Kim Jong Il may be gravely ill, perhaps the victim of a stroke, U.S. and other Western officials said Tuesday after he failed to appear for a major national parade. If so, it could jeopardize the already troubled international effort to get his nation to abandon nuclear weapons.

Kim's absence from a military parade for the country's 60th anniversary lent credence to reports that the man North Koreans call the "Dear Leader" had been incapacitated during the past few weeks.

South Korea's Yonhap news agency late Tuesday cited an unidentified government official as saying Kim was alive but ill. The official said Kim appeared to have suffered a collapse, a term in Korean normally used to indicate a grave illness such as a stroke. However, the official said Kim was definitely still alive.

Japan's Kyodo News agency said a senior North Korean diplomat and a top government official denied reports that Kim was seriously ill, calling the reports a conspiracy.

AP

In this Oct. 28, 2005 file photo released by China's Xinhua News Agnecy, North Korean leader Kim Jong Il, shakes hands with Chinese President Hu Jintao, unseen, before their talks in Pyongyang, North Korea.

Kyodo said Kim Yong Nam, North Korea's No. 2 official, said there was "no problem" with Kim. It offered no further details.

Kyodo also said it spoke late Tuesday in Pyongyang with Song Il Ho, North Korea's ambassador for normalization talks with Japan, and Song called the reports "worthless."

The 66-year-old Kim, who has been rumored to be in varying degrees of ill health for years, has not been seen since mid-August. Though he appears rarely in public and his voice is seldom broadcast, Kim has shown up for previous landmark celebrations.

"There is reason to believe Kim Jong Il has suffered a serious health setback, possibly a stroke," one Western intelligence official said. A senior U.S. official said fresh rumors had been circulating about Kim's health and his control over North Korea's highly centralized government.

A former CIA official with recent access to intelligence on North Korea said that even before Tuesday the agency was confident that reports of a health crisis were accurate.

The officials spoke anonymously to summarize sensitive intelligence.

The reclusive Kim took power in 1994 after the death of his father, Kim Il Sung. It was communism's first hereditary transfer of power, and both Kims are revered in a personality cult perpetrated by the country's authoritarian government.

Pakistan's Zardari sworn in as new president

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)—Repeatedly paying homage to his assassinated wife, new President Asif Ali Zardari declared Tuesday that he has a comprehensive plan to fight terrorism and said Pakistan's people are behind him.

Zardari, elected by legislators Saturday, was long on platitudes but short on specifics while meeting with media after taking the oath of office in a short ceremony at the presidential palace. He was chosen to replace Pervez Musharraf, a U.S. ally who resigned under pressure last month.

With President Hamid Karzai of neighboring Afghanistan by his side for a news conference, the widower of former two-time Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto said he hoped to turn Pakistan's negatives into positives.

"As far as America is concerned, the fact that we are on the globe and we are in the eye of the storm, I consider that an opportunity," Zardari said, noting that most countries welcome foreign investment.

"I intend to take that and make it our strength. We intend to take the world with us in developing the future of Pakistan and changing the future of our neighbors," he said.

Karzai said he found common ground with Zardari.

"For each step that you take in the war against terrorism for bringing peace to two countries, for bringing stability to two countries, Afghanistan will take many, many steps with you," he said.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Cooking show stint derails Thai prime minister

BANGKOK, Thailand (AP)—A Thai court removed the prime minister Tuesday for taking pay to host a TV cooking show, setting off wild celebrations by protesters occupying his office compound. But rejoicing could be short-lived—the ruling party vowed to put him back in power. The Constitutional Court's ruling took Samak Sundaravej at least temporarily out of the crosshairs of the People's Alliance for Democracy, a rightist movement that seized the Government House complex two weeks ago seeking to force the prime minister's resignation. But the ruling seemed unlikely to end the political crisis brought on by the alliance's demands for a sea change in Thai politics, beginning with Samak's ouster and eventually moving Thailand away from democracy in favor of a mostly appointed legislature. After the verdict, Samak's political party vowed to reelect him as prime minister, as allowed by law.

Off-target NATO bomb kills 2 Afghan civilians

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—A NATO bomb mistakenly hit a house 1 1/2 miles off target Tuesday, killing two civilians and wounding 10 even as Afghanistan's president was saying that terrorism cannot be defeated if innocents are killed in coalition operations. Meanwhile, a roadside bomb killed an Afghan contract worker and three soldiers in the U.S.-led coalition elsewhere in eastern Afghanistan, the coalition said. No other details were released. A NATO statement said the bomb was aimed at a spot used by insurgents to fire rockets in eastern Khost province but the weapon malfunctioned and hit a civilian house. "An immediate investigation into the cause of the incident has been launched and further details will be forthcoming once established," the alliance said.

Part of the ceiling at Manila's new airport terminal collapses, but no one hurt

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—An official says a large chunk of the ceiling at Manila's new airport terminal collapsed but there have been no injuries or disruptions. Airport manager Alfonso Cusi says a fiber cement board covering a ceiling beam at the arrival baggage area in the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3 fell down Wednesday for still unknown reasons. Cusi says no passengers were around when the 23-foot by 3-foot (7-meter by 1-meter) board fell. He says the airport's Japanese contractor has been told to immediately repair the ceiling. It was the third such incident at the terminal, which currently services only domestic flights.

World

Ike gives Cuba final kick, moves to Gulf of Mexico

HAVANA (AP)—Hurricane Ike moved into the warm waters of the Gulf and took aim at the U.S. and Mexican coasts Tuesday after bringing down aging buildings in Havana and tearing through western Cuba's tobacco country.

Forecasters said Ike, which has already killed at least 80 people in the Caribbean, could strengthen into a massive Category 3 storm before slamming into Texas or Mexico this weekend.

Some 1.2 million people - more than a tenth of Cuba's population—sought refuge from Ike, which killed four people and shredded hundreds of homes as it barreled across the island.

Winds howled and rains lashed the empty streets of Havana as towering waves broke over the seaside Malecon promenade, devoid of the bustling crowds of Havana residents who normally fish and chat by day and drink and socialize at night. Navigation was banned in Havana Bay, its usually placid surface stirred up by white-capped waves.

Police braved the storm to stop all but emergency traffic in streets littered with branches, rocks and the rubble from crumbling balconies.

The heavy rains soaked the buildings of Havana's picturesque older areas, causing some of the more dilapidated to collapse. Four aging houses on a single block were reduced to rubble when their walls came tumbling down with a loud boom, and work crews labored with heavy machinery in the strong winds to clear the rubble from the street.

Collapsing buildings were reported throughout the city, and more were probable in coming days as the structures dry out and weaken. All of the buildings appeared to have been evacuated, and no injuries were reported.

To the west, reports of damage were still sketchy as Ike moved across the region. Dangerous storm surges were reported along the southwestern coast, which is lined with small fishing villages. State news media said 19 coastal communities were evacuated.

Russia to keep 7,600 troops in 2 Georgia regions

TBILISI, Georgia (AP)—Russia announced Tuesday it would keep 7,600 troops in Abkhazia and South Ossetia for the foreseeable future, asserting power in the breakaway regions even as it began a pullout from positions deeper in Georgia.

The Kremlin's plans for a heavy military footprint in the enclaves mock Georgia's hopes that a revised peace agreement will lead to a complete Russian withdrawal from the fractured country at the heart of a bitter fray between Moscow and the West.

The deal that emerged from a day of frantic French diplomacy Monday may defuse tension by removing Russian forces from positions they hold in Georgia weeks after last month's war. But it left serious questions unanswered.

After hours of talks with French President Nicolas Sarkozy, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev promised to withdraw all Russian forces from positions outside Abkhazia and South Ossetia within about a month.

Medvedev's pledge seemed like a startling concession from Moscow, which had adamantly claimed to have met its obligations under the cease-fire brokered by Sarkozy last month. As recently as Sunday, Georgia said Russia was reinforcing its positions around a key port.

But even as it promises to pull back from positions outside South Ossetia and Abkhazia, Russia is strengthening its grip on the separatist regions themselves. That runs counter to Western demands that they remain a part of Georgia and casts a shadow over President Mikhail Saakashvili's hopes of uniting the nation.

On Tuesday, Russian forces pulled out of a position near Abkhazia, officials and residents said. Georgia's Rustavi-2 television showed residents of the Black Sea coastal town of Ganmukhuri rejoicing at the Russian departure.

"We have regained our freedom," said one woman.

Georgian Security Council chief Alexander Lomaia said the Russians had maintained three or four armored personnel carriers and a few dozen troops at the post. He said it was one of 24 Russian checkpoints or positions outside Abkhazia or South Ossetia as of Tuesday morning.

WORLD BRIEFS

Togo says bird flu hits poultry farm

LOME, Togo (AP)—An outbreak of bird flu has been confirmed in the West African nation of Togo for the first time since last year, the Health Ministry said Tuesday. The virus was detected at a poultry farm housing more than 4,500 birds in the village of Agbata outside the capital, Lome, said a ministry statement read over state television. It was not known how many birds died, but more than 80 per cent of those infected by the flu were fatalities, the ministry said. The statement did not say whether the birds were infected with the deadly H5N1 strain of the virus, which has scientists concerned because it has the potential to infect humans. At least 235 people have died of bird flu worldwide since 2003, according to the World Health Organization. Most human cases have been linked to contact with infected birds, but health experts worry the virus could mutate into a form that passes easily among humans, sparking a pandemic that some say could kill millions of people and overload health care systems.

Mexico's postal blues remade in hot pink

MEXICO CITY (AP)—Mexico's notoriously unreliable postal service is getting the shock treatment—shocking pink, that is. Infamous for lost packages and tardy delivery, the postal service is getting a hot-pink makeover to try to brighten up its image, win back customers—and pull it out of the red. Changes include a new logo, new uniforms and pink-and-lime-green painted post offices. Some will also sell cut-rate rice, beans and powdered milk alongside stamps. Coffee mugs and envelopes—something the post office didn't sell before—will also be available, but only in hot pink and lime green. The service's new symbol - a white carrier pigeon holding a letter in its beak—hit the streets Tuesday, a day after President Felipe Calderon unveiled the new look at a gala ceremony. The government hopes the new image and services will help the post office break even next year, after annual losses of up to $50 million.

Environment

Coral Sea eyed as world's largest no-take marine park

SYDNEY, Australia—An international coalition presented yesterday a proposal to the government of Australia to create the world's largest no-take marine park in the Coral Sea, an area that is important to the world's marine environment and significant in its deep historical and cultural ties to the region.

"Our oceans are in trouble. What we once thought of as an inexhaustible resource is rapidly deteriorating due to human activities like overfishing, pollution and global warming," said Joshua Reichert, managing director of the Pew Environment Group, which is helping to lead the coalition's effort as part of its Global Ocean Legacy project. "It will take bold initiatives like this one—protecting large, contiguous regions of the sea and involving a broad and diverse group of stakeholders—to begin allowing many of the world's fisheries and ocean ecosystems to recover."

The campaign partners, who include Australia's leading tropical marine scientists, former Chiefs of the Navy, members of the Battle for Australia Commemoration National Council, and Australian and international environmental organizations, are calling for one million square kilometers of the Coral Sea to be protected from extractive industries. The proposed park—which encompasses a key World War II maritime battle—lies immediately to the east of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and would be three times larger, extending to Australia's maritime boundary with Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and New Caledonia.

"Protecting the Coral Sea would preserve one of the planet's richest and most diverse ocean environments and would serve as an invaluable conservation model for every country, culture and community that relies on healthy oceans for subsistence, jobs and important economic revenue, tourism, recreation and protection from natural disasters," Reichert said.

ON THE NET
- http://www.globaloceanlegacy.org/coralsea/solution.html
- http://www.globaloceanlegacy.org/coralsea/nature.html
- http://www.globaloceanlegacy.org/coralsea/battle.html

The Coral Sea has more than 25 spectacular coral reefs, remote islands, towering underwater mountains and deep-sea canyons. Its abundant wildlife includes top predators such as sharks, tuna and marlin as well as 25 species of whales, dolphins, manta rays, seabirds and a diverse range of corals and reef fish. The Coral Sea also provides crucial habitats for endangered Hawksbill and Green sea turtles, as well as small reef and large ocean sharks, such as hammerheads.

It is also of great historical importance. In 1942, U.S. and Australia allied forces joined together in the Battle of the Coral Sea to prevent the invasion of Port Moresby. In two days of intense air battles, the American aircraft carrier USS *Lexington* was badly damaged, 216 of her crew lost their lives and two other American ships went down. While the Japanese sank more ships than they lost, the Allies successfully prevented a Japanese occupation of Port Moresby and greatly reduced the strength of Japanese forces for future critical battles.

The Australian Coral Sea Heritage Park project is part of the Global Ocean Legacy project initiated by the Pew Environment Group in partnership with the Oak Foundation, the Robertson Foundation and the Sandler Family Supporting Foundation. ***(PR)***

SAFEGUARDING YOUR FARMING BUSINESS

Avoid using unregistered pesticides

Second of a three-part series

Many pesticides products are available, but not all products are registered and thus legal to use.

Did you know that if you use pesticides on your farm they must be registered with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA)? Also, if you import, sell, distribute, use or dispose of unregistered pesticides, you may be in violation of federal law and CNMI Division of Environmental Quality pesticide regulations.

Under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), a pesticide is any substance or mixture of substances intended for preventing, destroying, repelling or mitigating any pest. If on your farm you use products that kill pests such as insects, fungi and weeds, these products are considered pesticides and must be registered with US EPA.

Legal products are registered with the EPA and have on the label an EPA Registration Number **(EPA Reg. No.)** and an EPA Establishment Number **(EPA Est. No.)**. The label must have complete instructions including where the product can be used, application instructions, what personal protective equipment to wear, and proper storage and disposal of the pesticide. *These instructions must be in English.*

Unregistered pesticides may pose added risks to anyone who applies the pesticide, fieldworkers and consumers who handle and eat the produce, and to the environment. If illegal pesticide residues are detected on your crops they may be quarantined or confiscated.

Pesticide applicator

If you think you have unregistered pesticide products at your farm or business, DO NOT THROW THEM AWAY. Contact Division of Environmental Quality for information and guidance in proper disposal.

Pesticide law

Pesticides are regulated by the CNMI Environmental Protection Act (Public Law 3-23) and the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act. Enforcement of both is the responsibility of the Division of Environmental Quality.

These laws set stringent rules governing the use of pesticides by:

- Requiring federal registration of pesticides sold or distributed in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.
- Prohibiting the use of any pesticide in a manner inconsistent with product labeling.
- Restricting the sale and use of certain hazardous pesticides to licensed dealers and certified applicator.
- Prohibiting the importation of unregistered pesticides.

For more information on pesticides and their use, contact the Pesticide program at the Division of Environmental Quality at 664-8500/1 or via email at environment@deq.gov.mp. ***(DEQ)***

Example of a partial US EPA Registered Pesticide Label showing format of Registration Numbers:

Active Ingredients:
Pyrethrins……...0.30%
Piperonyl Butoxide……2.40%
INERT INGREDIENTS…97.30%

KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN
CAUTION

EPA Reg. No. 1234-10 EPA Est. No. 1234-CA-1

What is the Adopt A Beach program?

The Adopt-a-Beach program is an anti-litter and beach clean up campaign intended to promote pride and natural resource stewardship in the Commonwealth. There are many benefits to the program. It :

- keeps our beaches clean and safe
- enhances and preserves the environment
- improves attractiveness of our beaches
- increases public awareness of the effects of littering
- reminds people not to litter.

Who can Adopt A Beach?

Families, schools, businesses and community-based organizations can participate in the year-round program by cleaning beaches, conducting litter monitoring and ensuring beautiful and clean marine waters.

Why Adopt A Beach?

The CNMI is beautiful—and we want to keep it that way. The condition of our beaches is a reflection on us, the people who live here. Adopting a beach shows pride in our island and is a great way to show that you and your organization care.

Litter is not only unattractive; it is also harmful to the environment. Did you know it takes over one million years for plastic and Styrofoam containers to decompose? There are more reasons to adopt:

- Learn about marine water issues and how to work toward solving these problems.
- Serve your community through hands-on volunteer work.
- Understand local governance and decision-making processes with regard to our lagoon.
- Create a channel through which you can vocalize concerns about beach closings and other marine environmental issues.
- Enjoy the beach with friends while making a difference!
- Have Fun!

When to Adopt A Beach?

Groups can adopt a beach at any time. Participants agree to clean up a section of a beach or the entire beach park four (4) times a year (depending on the volume of anticipated litter) for at least one year. DEQ will supply litterbags and gloves for the adoption (upon request and availability of supplies).

How to Adopt a Beach?

Adoptions are made on a first come, first serve basis and waiting lists are maintained for the more popular beach areas. Joint adoptions (two or more organizations) are also encouraged.

The following beaches are available:

- Bird Island
- Jeffrey's Beach
- Old Man by the Sea
- Tank Beach
- Marine Beach
- Forbidden Island
- Dandan Beach
- Ladder Beach
- Unai Dankulu (Agigan beach)
- Unai Dikiki (coral ocean point)
- San Antonio Beach
- Hopwood Beach
- Chalan Piao Beach
- San Isidro Beach Park (Latte 4)
- Sugar Dock/Aquarius Beach
- Saipan Community School
- Kilili Beach
- Civic Center Beach
- San Jose Beach
- Chalan Laulau Beach
- 13 Fisherman
- Fishing Base
- Aboni Beach
- Micro Beach
- Una Sadog Tasi (lower base)
- Tanapag Beach
- Achugao Beach
- San Roque School Beach
- Paupau Beach

Several organizations and families have adopted a beach through this program. Special thanks to Marianas Institute of Filipino CPAs and Accountants (MIFCPA), Saipancell Communications, Mt. Carmel JSA, Shirley's Coffee Shop, Saipan Unity Lions Club, and other government organizations.

Join the Adopt A Beach Program to create positive change for your local beach. Sign up today at environment@deq.gov.mp. For additional information, contact DEQ at 664-8500. ***(DEQ)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Volunteers clean up marine debris from the Old Man by the Sea.

Life & Style

Pitt, Clooney dumb down for Coens 'Burn'

TORONTO (AP)—Joel and Ethan Coen know their idiots.

They've written every sort of bonehead, nitwit and lamebrain imaginable in both comic and tragic form in such films as "Raising Arizona," "Fargo," "The Big Lebowski" and "O Brother, Where Art Thou?"

Yet they may have topped themselves for siring simpletons with the dark comedy "Burn After Reading," which stars usual Coen suspects George Clooney, Frances McDormand and Richard Jenkins and new pals Brad Pitt, John Malkovich and Tilda Swinton.

They're like the Hole in the Head Gang, this bunch that blunders its way through the motions of a spy game touched off by a missing computer disc with some modestly sensitive CIA secrets.

It's a farcical about-face from the Coens' last film, the bleak "No Country for Old Men," which dominated the 2007 Academy Awards, the Coens winning for best-picture, director and adapted screenplay.

Does the Coens' penchant for dopes say anything about what they think of humanity as a whole?

"Jeez, I don't know," Ethan Coen, 50, says in an interview alongside his brother with The Associated Press a few hours before "Burn After Reading" premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival. "It's a fair characterization of these characters, but boy, bringing it to real life is kind of a strange thing. You don't go around thinking about how characters in a movie, in the stories you make up, relate to people in general."

"Right," Joel Coen, 53, continues. "I don't think we would draw or extrapolate anything from those things into generalizations about people or how we feel about people."

AP

In this image provided by Carlo Allegri for Focus Features, the cast and crew from "Burn Before Reading," clockwise from first row left, directors Joel Coen and Ethan Coen, actors John Malkovich, Tilda Swinton, Brad Pitt and Frances McDormand pose for a cast photo during the International Film Festival in Toronto, Friday, Sept 5, 2008.

AP

In this image released by Focus Features, directors Ethan Coen, left, Joel Cohen, and actor George Clooney are shown on the set of, "Burn After Reading."

The Coens say dummies often just make for good characters and stories.

In this case, they settled on a group of actors they wanted to work with and kicked around ideas for a story that would hold them all. McDormand, Joel Coen's wife, has worked frequently with them since their debut feature, "Blood Simple," winning the best-actress Oscar for "Fargo."

Clooney and Jenkins each had worked with the Coens on two previous flicks, while the brothers had long wanted to direct Pitt and Malkovich.

The Coens wrote five of the six main characters in "Burn After Reading" specifically for those actors. Swinton, who won last year's supporting-actress Oscar for Clooney's "Michael Clayton," was cast in the remaining role.

The actors eagerly signed on to work with the Coens.

"You hate to sort of just sit around praising people. It sounds like, I don't know, you're running for office. But I think for most actors, they're sort of dream people to work for," Malkovich says. "They're highly accomplished, very nice, fun to be around, kind, they have kind of a Midwestern reserve and nice detachment from who they are. It's just really a pleasure."

The Coens are a little hazy on the order in which they came up with the film's strange confluence of Washington's intelligence community and the world of physical fitness, but Joel Coen says an early idea was casting Malkovich as a CIA analyst who loses his job.

From there, they thought about how to cross his path with ordinary citizens in Washington and came up with the notion of McDormand as a gym worker obsessed with reinventing herself by plastic surgery, a la Linda Tripp, a key figure in the Monica Lewinsky scandal.

Pitt's character became McDormand's chuckle-headed co-worker and ally, Jenkins the moon-eyed boss silently smitten with her, Clooney a federal marshal and sex hound sleeping with Swinton, who's Malkovich's ice queen of a wife.

To quote Clooney in "O Brother, Where Art Thou?", the whole bunch is "just dumber than a bag of hammers."

A disc containing CIA material Malkovich's character is using to write his memoirs falls into the hands of Pitt and McDormand, who set out to blackmail him with all the panache of the Keystone Kops.

"The dynamic in this movie, for instance, between Fran and Brad, we can compare to like a Laurel and Hardy movie, where both characters are really idiots, but by common consent between the two of them, one of them has decided that the other one is smarter. There's a little of that in `O Brother,'" Joel Coen says. "So that how people perceive who the alpha leader is or the smarter one is, that can be very funny or interesting to reflect on."

Ethan Coen compares that dumb-and-dumber factor to experiences they've had on commercials and advertising shoots.

"Sometimes it's good, and you can do kind of fun stuff that's interesting, and sometimes you're in a situation where people are sitting around talking about a bunch of completely idiotic ideas," Ethan Coen says. "And you couldn't choose one from the other because they're all totally idiotic, but somehow a consensus forms in the group that this one is the right one. It's bizarre."

Also bizarre is much of the action the Coens put their characters through. Clooney, whom Joel Coen says shares their "puerile sense of humor," is set to work at a secret project in the basement: Building an intricate sex apparatus as a gift for his character's wife.

Joel Coen said the sex machine had two inspirations: A contraption he once saw made by a movie grip and another displayed at the Museum of Sex in New York City. The Coens offered to take Clooney to the museum to show him the device.

"George said, `That's all I need is to be seen coming out of the Museum of Sex with you guys,'" Joel Coen said.

Lately, the Coens have wasted no time moving on to their next projects. They already had shot "Burn After Reading" when they collected their trophies at last February's Oscars, and they began shooting another film Monday in their home state, Minnesota.

Starring a cast of comparative Hollywood unknowns led by stage actor Michael Stuhlbarg, "A Serious Man" centers on the domestic strife of a college professor in a Midwest Jewish community in 1967.

"It's a 'warmedy,' it's a 'Table for Five' kind of thing," Ethan Coen says, slyly adding, "It's our 'warmedy.'"Approaching stories in their own twisted way remains the Coens' routine, even though they have edged from the fringes of cinema into the Hollywood players club.

Their Oscar triumph on "No Country for Old Men" hasn't changed a thing, they say.

"No, no, no," Ethan Coen says. "It's a weird thing. It might have if it had been, like, on our second movie, but we're just frankly, we're just kind of set in our ways. ... We're just old."

"Age does play into it in the sense that if you stick around long enough, if you stick around and survive in any business long enough, you get a creeping and creepy feeling a little bit, after a while, that you've somehow entered the establishment of that world," Joel Coen says. "Nobody likes to necessarily think of themselves in that way.

"The Oscars are sort of just another aspect of having stuck around long enough, and that's sort of confirmation of the fact that you're part of the establishment as opposed to part of the outside. There are good things and bad things about that, as you can imagine, and there would be in any business. But mostly, it's a good thing in the sense that when your ambition is to be able to keep doing what you want to do the way you want to do it, that kind of attention and confirmation from the business is great. It can only be helpful."

AP

Britney Spears accepts the award for best pop video at the MTV Music Awards in Paramount Pictures Studios in Los Angeles on Sunday, Sept. 7, 2008.

Lynne Spears: You're still my brave little girl

NEW YORK (AP)—The mother of Britney Spears says that the singer has overcome the tabloid nightmares of the past few years and believes that little by little, her daughter is regaining her "glorious voice."

Lynne Spears writes of her famous child and her other celebrity daughter, Jamie Lynn, in "Through the Storm," to be published Sept. 16 by Thomas Nelson, a leading Christian publisher. The Associated Press obtained an early copy.

The 211-page book, which includes several pages of family photographs, tracks Britney Spears' life through her precocious early years—she was singing and dancing by the time she was 3—through her explosive rise to her pill-addicted, near-tragic fall.

Lynne Spears describes young Britney as a confident, outgoing girl whose talents were so obvious that family friends would insist she would one day be on Broadway. Spears rejects the image that she pushed Britney into show business, and writes that the singer was always focused on achievement and would constantly practice to the music of Madonna, Whitney Houston and others.

In "Through the Storm," Lynne Spears presents herself as a loving, selfless (she gave up her job as a school teacher for her daughter's sake) but increasingly powerless parent. After the jolting, but pleasant surprise of Britney Spears' debut smash, " ... Baby One More Time," Lynne Spears says she felt she was losing control when a 1999 Rolling Stone magazine story featured a racy cover of the singer in panties and a bra.

Lynne Spears recalls feeling "shock and dismay" at seeing her daughter shave her head, at her brief marriages to childhood friend Jason Alexander and dancer-rapper Kevin Federline, and her highly publicized custody battles over her two children. She also recalls feeling she had been "punched in the stomach" when she learned that Jamie Lynn Spears was pregnant at age 16.

She praises Federline as a "caring daddy" and says Britney Spears is "an amazing mother," but only when at her best. Lynne Spears also writes warmly of her daughter's former boyfriend, Justin Timberlake, but says the willful nature of the young couple helped break them up.

The bottom came in the past two years with Britney Spears' increasingly disturbing public behavior and her drugged private life in her Malibu, Calif., house. Lynne Spears writes that she was distraught as then-manager Sam Lutfi told her he was grinding pills and putting them in Britney's food, hoping to induce a coma that would enable doctors to cure her of all addictions.

Britney Spears was hospitalized twice this year, the second time in February, when paramedics took her to the psychiatric ward of the UCLA Medical Center, where her mother says she finally received the care she needed.

12 valuable paintings stolen from home

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A dozen valuable paintings including works by Marc Chagall, Diego Rivera and Emil Nolde were stolen from the home of an elderly couple, and police issued an international alert to recover them.

A $200,000 reward was offered Tuesday for help in recovering the artwork, stolen Aug. 23 from a home in the San Fernando Valley. Police have notified auction houses, the FBI and Interpol in case someone tries to sell the paintings.

"These are world-class pieces," said Richard Rice, a senior consultant at the Gallerie Michael in Beverly Hills. "Every single one is museum caliber."

Police and art experts said it would be almost impossible to resell the paintings at anything near their true value. Stolen art is flagged on numerous Web sites and police databases.

"If you look at the last 10 years, a lot of the art that has been stolen that is this important has been returned to the owners because it is so difficult to resell," Rice said.

The theft occurred after a maid went to the store and left a service door unlocked, police said. In the hour or so the maid was gone, the paintings were taken from two adjacent rooms, Detective Donald Hrycyk said.

The elderly couple who lives in the home were in a different part of the house at the time of the theft and did not hear an intruder. The husband is bedridden and the wife was sleeping.

Detectives have interviewed the maid, who has worked for the couple several years, and several other domestic helpers. No arrests have been made.

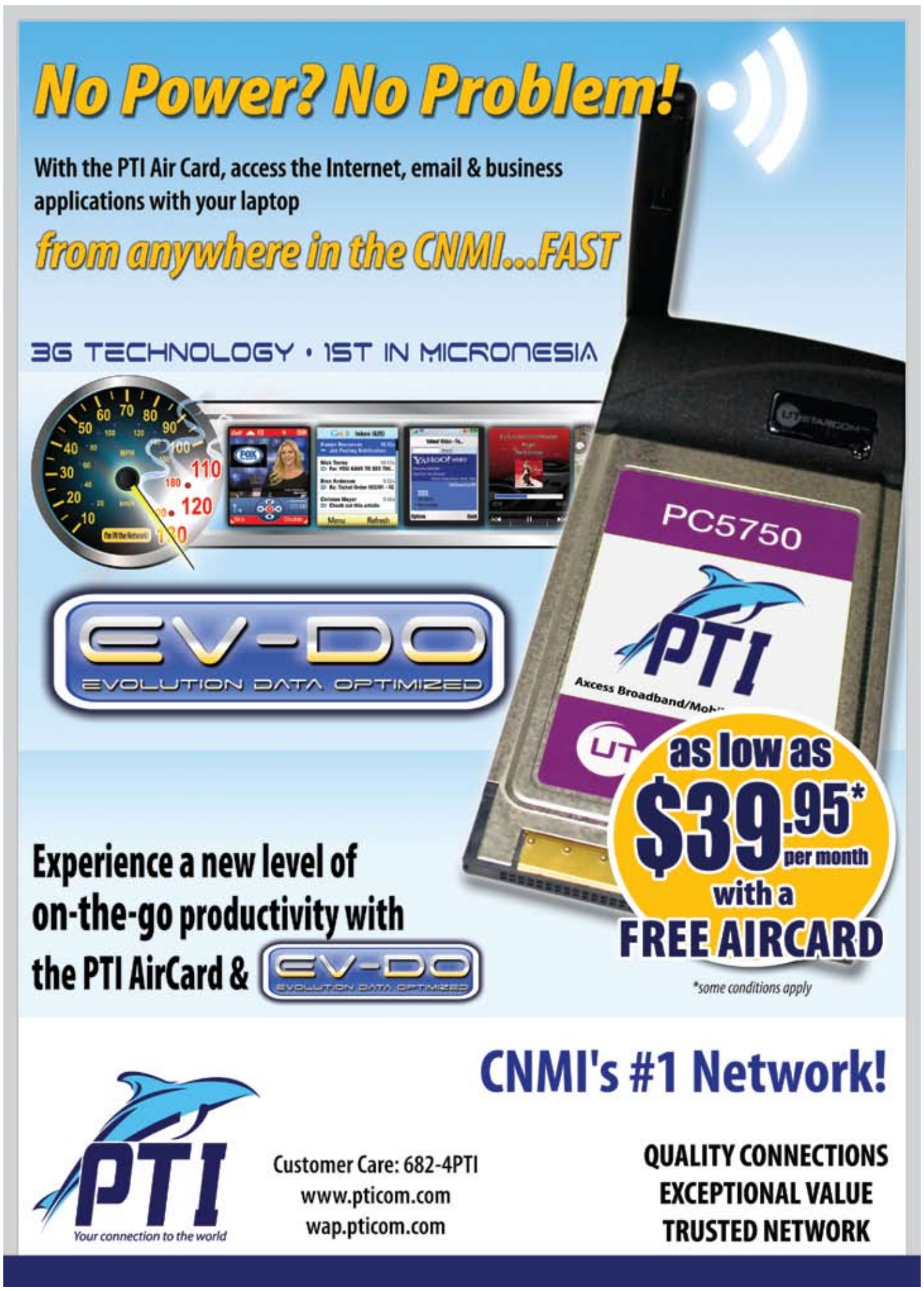
"Everybody is a suspect," Hrycyk said. "We are looking into the reasonableness of the maid's statement, and we are looking at the other people who have had access to the house."

Rice estimated the stolen paintings range in value from about $800,000 to as much as $4 million. He believes the most valuable was the Kees van Dongen portrait "Alicia Alanova," a 1933 oil of a woman in a hat.

The artworks were insured by the unidentified couple, who made their fortune in real estate, Hrycyk said.

AP

This combination of two photos provided by the Los Angeles Police Department shows paintings titled "Peasants" by Marc Chagall," left, and Alicia Alanova" by Kees van Dongen, that where stolen from a home in Los Angeles on Aug. 23, 2008.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Paris doc shows confessional side of Hilton

TORONTO (AP)—One clear fan of a new Paris Hilton documentary has a familiar name: Paris Hilton. As she left the theater where "Paris, Not France" premiered Tuesday night at the Toronto International Film Festival, Hilton gave a few claps of applause after director Adria Petty was announced for a question-and-answer session to discuss the documentary.

With close access to Hilton, Petty shot extensive footage of Hilton talking about her image, her notorious sex tape, the tabloid photographers who follow her and just the business of being herself.

"I'm basically being judged, and they're creating this false person, and I can't do anything about it," Hilton says in the film.

Featuring interviews with Hilton's parents, sister Nicky, publicist Elliott Mintz and such personalities as Donald Trump, "Paris, Not France" follows her on business meetings, a promotional trip to Japan and everyday tasks such as getting a burger at a drive-thru while dozens of photographers take shots of her ordering.

"It's amazing that this woman is a human being and that people actually can be ruthless enough to forget that," Petty said. "That's the one thing about this movie and about that experience with her is I could have just been shooting fluff, but she gave me a lot more."

Before the Toronto premiere, Hilton posed for photos with Petty but did not talk to reporters. Outside the theater afterward, Hilton signed a few autographs before she was driven off in an SUV.

Petty said the idea was to create for this era a film like "Madonna: Truth or Dare," the 1991 documentary that examined the phenomenon surrounding the pop singer.

Hilton has "created a mystery about herself that a film like this maybe wouldn't have been a great thing for her in the past," Petty said. "But now, she's been so saturated in the media. We're so used to her. To see a new side of her is so exciting."

AP

Paris Hilton poses backstage at the 2008 MTV Video Music Awards held at Paramount Pictures Studio Lot on Sunday, Sept. 7, 2008, in Los Angeles.

Cops: Ric Flair roughed up by daughter's boyfriend

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP)—Most of former professional wrestler Ric Flair's fights were scripted. But Chapel Hill, N.C., police didn't find anything fake about the blood and bruises on the Nature Boy after a fight with his daughter's 22-year-old boyfriend.

Neither man was charged, but Flair's daughter, Ashley Elizabeth Fliehr, was charged for resisting police after the 22-year-old became belligerent and kicked an officer, Chapel Hill police Lt. Kevin Gunter said Tuesday.

Neighbors called police about 2:30 a.m. Friday about a fight at an apartment in the city about 30 miles northwest of Raleigh. The fight was over, but officers followed a trail of blood to Fliehr's apartment.

She told police the men had fought but it was over and things were fine. Officers found the 59-year-old Flair, whose real name is Richard Fliehr, on a bed in the back room. The boyfriend was in another part of the apartment.

Flair admitted fighting with the boyfriend but he didn't want to press charges, Gunter said. Gunter refused to give the boyfriend's name because he was not charged.

"He was kind of elusive," Gunter said of Flair. "He said everything was fine. Officers said he had a 'no problems here' kind of attitude. He just wanted everything forgotten."

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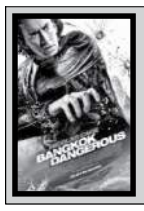
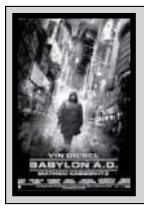


Bangkok Dangerous

Friday		4:05	7:00	9:50
Saturday	1:00	4:05	7:00	9:50
Sunday	1:00	4:05	7:00	
Mon thru Thurs		4:05	7:00	

Nicolas Cage, Shahkrit Yamnarm
Action, Thriller, Sci-Fi • Rated R

Synopsis
The life of Joe, an anonymous assassin, takes an unexpected turn when he travels to Thailand to complete a series of contract killings. Joe, a remorseless hitman, is in Bangkok to execute four enemies of a ruthless crime boss named Surat. He hires Kong, a street punk and pickpocket, to run errands for him with the intention of covering his tracks by killing him at the end of the assignment. Strangely, Joe, the ultimate lone wolf, finds himself mentoring the young man instead whilst simultaneously being drawn into a tentative romance with a local shop girl.



Babylon A.D.

Friday		4:00	7:10	9:35
Saturday	1:15	4:00	7:10	9:35
Sunday	1:15	4:00	7:10	
Mon thru Thurs		4:00	7:10	

Vin Diesel, Michelle Yeoh
Drama, Thriller, Sci-Fi • Rated PG 13

Synopsis
It is the not-too-distant future. Thousands of satellites scan, observe and monitor our every move. Much of the planet is a war zone; the rest, a collection of wretched way stations, teeming megalopolises, and vast wastelands punctuated by areas left radioactive from nuclear meltdowns. It is a world made for hardened warriors, one of whom, a mercenary known only as Toorop, lives by a simple survivor's code: kill or be killed. His latest assignment has him smuggling a young woman named Aurora from a convent in Kazakhstan to New York City.

Traitor

Friday		4:10	7:25	9:40
Saturday	1:20	4:10	7:25	9:40
Sunday	1:20	4:10	7:25	
Mon thru Thurs		4:10	7:25	

Don Cheadle, Guy Pearce
Drama, Thriller • Rated PG 13

Synopsis
When straight arrow FBI agent Roy Clayton heads up the investigation into a dangerous international conspiracy, all clues seem to lead back to former U.S. Special Operations officer, Samir Horn. A mysterious figure with a web of connections to terrorist organizations, Horn has a knack for emerging on the scene just as a major operation goes down. The inter-agency task force looking into the case meets with Carter, a veteran CIA contractor who seemingly has his own agenda and Max Archer, a fellow FBI agent.

Death Race

Friday		4:30	7:20	9:55
Saturday	1:25	4:30	7:20	9:55
Sunday	1:25	4:30	7:20	
Mon thru Thurs		4:30	7:20	

Jason Statham, Tyrese Gibson
Action, Thriller • Rated R

Mirrors

Friday		4:25	7:30	9:45
Saturday	1:30	4:25	7:30	9:45
Sunday	1:30	4:25	7:30	
Mon thru Thurs		4:25	7:30	

Kiefer Sutherland, Paula Patton
Thriller, Horror • Rated R

Tropic Thunder

Friday		4:20	7:15	10:00
Saturday	1:10	4:20	7:15	10:00
Sunday	1:10	4:20	7:15	
Mon thru Thurs		4:20	7:15	

Ben Stiller, Jack Black
Comedy • Rated R

The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor

Friday		4:15	7:05	9:30
Saturday	1:05	4:15	7:05	9:30
Sunday	1:05	4:15	7:05	
Mon thru Thurs		4:15	7:05	

Brendan Fraser, Jet Li
Action, Adventure • Rated PG 13

● NO PASSES ■ NO PASSES OR SUPER SAVERS

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Spike Lee to head Babelgum Fest jury

MILAN, Italy (AP)—Spike Lee again is on the prowl for new filmmaking talent in his second year heading the jury of the Babelgum Online Film Festival.

No red carpets and no cinemas - Babelgum, an Internet company that streams videos online for free, has made the Internet its venue. Independent filmmakers upload their entries onto Babelgum's platform, and audiences vote for their favorites.

Last year's inaugural edition of the festival received 1,000 entries from 86 countries, according to Babelgum. More than 1.5 million viewers voted to select the final cut for the jury.

"The results from the first Babelgum Online Film Festival proved that audiences from all over the world are eager for new content, and that independent filmmakers are excited to have found a new place to showcase their work," Lee said Tuesday, adding that the festival "has the potential to reach more audiences than any other festival in the world because of the Internet's global reach."

Babelgum is accepting uploads of independent short- and medium-length films through the end of the year. The winners will be announced early next year at a time and place still to be determined.

This year, the festival has reduced the number of categories from seven to four, including short films up to 20 minutes, documentary and animation.

Babelgum viewers will select the top 10 films in each category. From those, Lee will then choose a winner in each category for the Spike Lee Award, worth $28,400. A four-member jury also will choose a winner in each category, with prizes still to be determined. Another prize of $28,400 will be given to an emerging talent from any of the four categories.

AP

In this Sept. 7, 2008 file photo, director Spike Lee talks during a news conference for the film "Miracle at St. Anna" during the 2008 Toronto International Film Festival in Toronto.

Babelgum, which was started by the founder of Italy's second-largest telecommunications company Fastweb, launched its site for the general public in 2007. Supported by advertising, Babelgum uses peer-to-peer technology and focuses on content from independent producers. Competitors include Joost and VeohTV.

Babelgum, which has been pushing to expand its North American presence, also announced a new venture with the Cinetic Media, an industry consulting company that concentrates on financing and sales, to show 12 festival-quality feature-length movies, one a month for a year.

No fanfare planned for Guy Ritchie's 40th birthday

TORONTO (AP)—Guy Ritchie already celebrated a milestone birthday this year: wife Madonna's 50th. So the filmmaker isn't thinking much about his own milestone birthday on Wednesday.

"I've thought less about my 40th birthday than almost any other birthday," said Ritchie, who was in Toronto to promote his new film "RocknRolla," which opens Oct. 8. "I'm not sure if that's kind of an unconscious thing. But I have no plans. So I hope someone's organizing something for me."

But don't expect a Madonna-sized bash, he said.

"I paid for Madonna's 50th," Ritchie said of his wife's party. "And unless someone's prepared to pay the same amount for mine, it's unlikely to be as big."

Besides, the writer-director has kept quiet about his big day, said Gerard Butler, one of the stars of "RocknRolla."

"He didn't tell anybody," Butler said. "I'm thinking he doesn't want anybody to know he's that old." Ritchie still wants gifts though: "Just lots of accolade and money."

Writer and director Guy Ritchie attends a screening of his new film "RocknRolla" during opening night of the Toronto International Film Festival on Thursday, Sept. 4, 2008 in Toronto.

AP

Sarandon's daughter says mom's fashion-challenged

NEW YORK (AP)—Eva Amurri says she has nothing in common with mother Susan Sarandon when it come to style.

"She is really very very very disinterested in fashion," Amurri said at the Tuesday night presentation of Max Azria's spring collection at New York Fashion Week. "She doesn't care. She wears her gym clothes from when she comes back from the gym until night. Sometimes she puts a jacket over it if I really beg her to, but she doesn't really care very much."

The 23-year-old actress is Sarandon's daughter with Italian filmmaker Franco Amurri. Sarandon, 61, has two other children by her longtime partner, actor Tim Robbins.

Amurri starred alongside Sarandon in the 2002 film "The Banger Sisters." Her other credits include the 2004 dark comedy "Saved!" and the upcoming "New York, I Love You."

She often pops up on red carpets in sophisticated dresses, and said she gravitates toward more classic styles.

If not from her mother, where did she get her love of dressing up?

"I have some good friends in fashion," she said Amurri, wearing a light brown blouse and black skirt. "I don't know, maybe seeing what they do and kind of learning about how artistic it is. The whole process has given me an appreciation I think."

AP

Actress Susan Sarandon attends the premiere of "Middle Of Nowhere" during the Toronto International Film Festival on Saturday, Sept. 6, 2008 in Toronto.

Glorious NYC lawsuit ruling for 'Borat' filmmakers

NEW YORK (AP)—A New York judge has tossed out lawsuits brought by a driving instructor and two etiquette school teachers who said the makers of the movie "Borat" deceived them.

Judge Loretta Preska says all three accepted money and signed agreements releasing the filmmakers from liability. She noted in a Sept. 3 ruling the agreements said the plaintiffs consented to appear in a "documentary-style" movie.

In the 2006 film "Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan," British comedian Sacha Baron Cohen plays an uncouth and anti-Semitic journalist traveling the United States in pursuit of Pamela Anderson. Cohen often fools people with his gag interviews.

Cohen

Lawyers for the plaintiffs haven't returned phone messages seeking comment.

Minnie Driver reportedly gives birth to son

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Minnie Driver has given birth to a not-so-little one. Henry Story Driver was born in Los Angeles on Friday and weighed in at a hearty 9 lbs., 12 oz, her publicist Jessica Kolstad told People magazine.

Driver, 38, confirmed that she was pregnant during an appearance on "The Tonight Show" in March, when host Jay Leno remarked on her baby bump.

She has not revealed the name of the father.

Driver stars on the FX cable TV series "The Riches" with British comedian Eddie Izzard. She was nominated for an Academy Award for her performance in the 1997 film "Good Will Hunting."

In this March 19, 2008 file photo is shown Minnie Driver attending a private screening of the animated short film "Trembled Blossoms" at the Prada store in Los Angeles.

AP

Oasis postpones concert after Gallagher assaulted

LONDON, Ontario (AP)—British band Oasis has postponed its concert in London, Ontario, after a fan attacked and injured guitarist Noel Gallagher.

A statement on the band's Web site says Gallagher had bruises on his ribs and hip and was unable to perform Tuesday.

Gallagher was injured Sunday after a man ran onto the stage during a performance at the Virgin Festival in Toronto. While playing the song "Morning Glory," Gallagher was pushed from behind and fell onto his monitor speakers.

Daniel Sullivan, 47, of Pickering, Ontario, has been charged with assault and is scheduled to appear in court Oct. 24.

The London, Ontario, show has been rescheduled for Dec. 15. The band's next performance is set for Friday in New York.

Woman puts down deep roots growing up in sisters' shadow

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: Like "Chaz's Brother" (June 17), who is living in the shadow of his extremely popular younger brother, I, too, spent years feeling invisible, but finally looked for ways to differentiate myself from my "perfect" siblings. In the process of pursuing my own interests, I also found friends who liked me for who I was.

Now that I'm 32, I realize that I have something my sisters don't—strong friendships with people I never took for granted. My sisters, meanwhile, were used to everyone adoring them and never bothered cultivating relationships the way I did. People eventually got sick of being taken for granted, and time has been the true test for their relationships with those who once flocked to them.

Neither of them has friends who would drop everything to help them in time of need, provide a shoulder to cry on or help with a major move. On the other hand, by being more than just pretty on the outside, I have gained friends who love me for who I am and reciprocate the loyalty I've shown them over the years. Now it's my sisters' turn to say, "I wish I were more like you."

LYDIA IN OHIO

DEAR LYDIA: Thank you for sharing your personal experience. Some readers took issue with my assertion that you can't run away from your history or your "place" in the family. Read on:

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I was always in the shadow of my older sister. The teachers liked her better, she got higher grades, had more friends, and was just better at everything than I was.

But life has taught me that I am just as good at most things and even better at some. I have been successful beyond my wildest dreams. Once I put the focus on what I could do, rather than comparing myself with my sister, everything changed. The outcome of your life really has nothing to do with your sibling. It has everything to do with how you respond to him or her and those around you.

SUCCESSFUL IN THE MIDWEST

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I speak from experience as someone who has moved 1,000 miles from my hometown and has spent 20 years in my new state. Before I left I was regarded as the "family baby." I was not taken seriously and didn't have much of an identity, other than the one some in my family saddled me with.

Moving away at 23 to a new home in the West was the best thing that ever happened to me. I grew up fast, handled my own affairs, learned how not to lean on family or anyone else for support, and generally accepted life on my own terms. My old life back home is gone, and I honestly love it that way.

BETTER IN COLORADO

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: "Chaz's Brother" needs to realize that what he has is far more substantial than what Chaz has. As a woman, I would much rather have a man who is the nicer, warmer one whom people can talk to, than be with a man who I have to share with two other women. What Chaz's brother has going for him will last longer than a relationship with any of those "three gorgeous women" Chaz is seeing.

The same was true for my older sister and me. She is now a divorced mother of two, while I have been happily married for 15 years. I had to learn to live my own life in the sun, not in someone else's shadow.

LEARNED THE LESSON IN NORTH DAKOTA

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: In school, my older brother was smart, talented and good-looking. I was known as "Jay's sister" and dreamed of having my own identity. When he was 21, Jay was killed in a car wreck. Suddenly I had the solo status I had long desired, but I was lost without my guiding beacon.

To "Chaz's Brother": Enjoy the light. Step out of his shadow now. Find your own talents and be thankful for your brother's shining star. Occasionally I will run into an old friend who remembers my "perfect" brother. I couldn't be prouder to be known as "Jay's sister."

MISSING THE SHADOW

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

I PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE...
TO QUEEN FRAGG... AND HER MIGHTY STATE OF HYSTERIA...
NCIPAL
IT'S GOING TO BE A LONG YEAR.
9/11
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Garfield®

By Jim Davis

GARFIELD!!
LOSE THE PUTTING GREEN
AW, MAN!
JIM DAVIS 9-11
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Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

WORST HOME OFFICE JOKES EVER
Q: WHAT DO YOU CALL SOMEONE WHO WORKS MORE FROM A COFFEE SHOP THAN FROM HOME?
I HAVEN'T A CLUE.
A: TOO LAZY TO FIX COFFEE FOR THEMSELVES.
9/11
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Brian Basset

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

WELL, YOU SEEM PERFECTLY HEALTHY.
BUT I'D LIKE TO WAIT AND SEE THE LAB RESULTS.
I'M NOT A LAB.
OH, IN THAT CASE, YOU'RE GOOD TO GO.
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CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

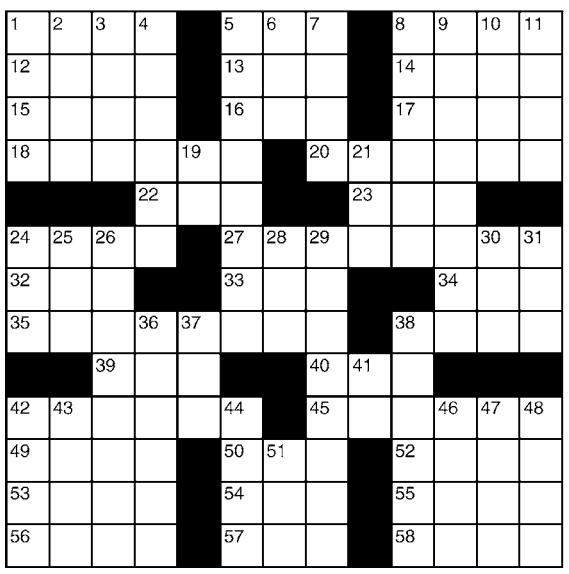
ACROSS
1 Uses an abacus
5 Predicament
8 Thick chunk
12 Gilpin of "Frasier"
13 Hearty brew
14 Storytelling dance
15 Membership
16 Subway component
17 Related
18 Start a journey
20 Parking lot attendants
22 Eve, originally
23 Acknowledge applause
24 Galley supply
27 Comfy footstools
32 Justice Dept. div.
33 "So that's it, eh?"
34 "Flying Down to —"
35 Jack-of-all-trades
38 Increases the volume
39 Half-ton measure
40 Pussycat's partner
42 Assails
45 Snub
49 Kamehameha Highway locale
50 Pitch
52 49-Across, e.g.
53 Memo acronym
54 Swelled head
55 Night light
56 Stitches
57 Church seat
58 Minedover matter

DOWN
1 Basilica section
2 Consider
3 Uninteresting
4 Longnecked lutes
5 Soldier's footwear
6 Carte lead-in
7 Mogul Griffin
8 Kin of "aloha"
9 Tepid
10 Settled down
11 Prohibits
19 Smallest st.
21 Bloodgroup letters
24 Vacationing
25 Lawyers' org.
26 Manpowered transport
28 Calendar abbr.
29 Annie's song?
30 Pinch
31 ABBA song
36 Traffic problems
37 Make up your mind
38 The monk in "The Da Vinci Code" was one
41 Lindbergh book
42 Downy neckwear
43 Relaxation
44 Dance lesson
46 — -friendly
47 Berg portion
48 Marshy areas
51 Time of your life?

Solution time: 25 mins.

O	V	E	N	■	C	A	P	■	I	D	E	S
D	E	L	I	■	A	D	O	■	D	I	R	E
D	I	S	C	A	R	D	S	■	E	S	N	E
S	L	E	E	P	■	■	T	R	A	C	E	D
■	■	■	L	E	W	D	■	E	L	L	■	■
L	A	D	Y	■	H	U	E	D	■	O	W	L
I	I	I	■	D	I	S	C	O	■	S	E	A
E	M	S	■	A	N	K	H	■	B	E	E	P
■	■	C	A	N	■	Y	O	R	E	■	■	■
S	P	O	N	G	E	■	■	O	A	T	H	S
L	E	V	I	■	D	I	S	C	R	E	E	T
U	S	E	S	■	G	N	U	■	D	A	M	E
M	O	R	E	■	E	K	E	■	S	L	O	P

Yesterday's answer 9-11



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Ariana Richards, 29; Ludacris, 31; Harry Connick Jr., 41; Moby, 43

Happy Birthday: Focus on the bright side of life. This is a time to be free-spirited and creative in all that you do. Open your heart and your mind to new ideas and concepts that will alter your direction and help you see all the existing possibilities. Surround yourself with thinkers and doers. Your numbers are 1, 9, 14, 22, 28, 31, 44

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Doors will open if you offer to lend a hand to others. A partnership is looking very positive. You can work as a team to create something worthwhile and provide yourself with an exhilarating challenge. 4 stars

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Don't give in to pressure or allow anyone to make you feel guilty for not contributing to something you cannot afford or believe in. Concentrate on your own needs and offer the ones you love what you can. ✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): You can experience the ride of a lifetime if you give your all to what you do. Love is in the stars and, with your Gemini flirtatious charm, you will win the heart of someone who interests you professionally and personally. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): You may have a tough decision to make regarding a settlement, investment or dealing with someone else's money. Take your time—making a mistake will cost you emotionally and financially. Don't count on others. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Your friendly demeanor will help you get your way. Tell your story and you will spark an interest in those who best suit your needs and who will offer you help. Love is on the rise—celebrate your upcoming success together. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): You may have to act out of character today if you want things to happen fast. Use your skills, knowledge and expertise and everything will fall into place. Your word will have a lot of clout and will benefit you. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Enjoy your family, friends and peers. You can make personal and professional gains by showing your diversity. A love interest will develop with someone you least expect—don't let it conflict with your current situation. ✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): There is a development taking place and you want to make sure you get the proper view as to what is unfolding. A problem at home will be due to a secret or a connection you have with someone your loved ones do not know—but know of. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Someone who has an interest in you will help you get ahead but be careful not to use this person for the sole benefit of getting ahead. The very person who can help you move up can also cause your downfall. Be sincere. ✪✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Stick to what you know and do best or someone will step in and take over. You cannot play emotional games or let someone meddle in your private affairs. A responsibility you have handled for some time will pay off. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Everything is coming together for you. There is good fortune in the stars and a chance to come into something that will help you. A commitment, renewing your vows with someone you love or dealing with legal matters will all work out. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): There is a secret that may be revealed under emotional duress. Don't take action quickly or you will make a mistake you'll regret. Don't burden yourself with things you can't change. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You have pizzazz and patience and are creative and smart. You are a leader who has charm coupled with a stern attitude.

Birthday Baby: You are hardheaded, intent and relentless. You are creative, big-hearted, intense and mysterious about your desires.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun,* ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

7		2		9	3	5		
			8				4	
							1	2
	4							
5				3				9
							8	
2	8							
	5				4			
		6	2	7		1		3

Difficulty Level ★★★ 9/11

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

1	5	2	8	7	9	6	4	3
8	6	9	5	3	4	2	7	1
4	3	7	1	6	2	9	8	5
5	4	1	2	9	3	7	6	8
9	8	6	4	1	7	3	5	2
7	2	3	6	8	5	1	9	4
6	7	8	3	5	1	4	2	9
2	1	5	9	4	6	8	3	7
3	9	4	7	2	8	5	1	6

Difficulty Level ★★★ 9/10

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

BOND INSURERS **Solution: 10 letters**

M	C	E	M	C	L	A	T	I	P	A	C	M	(T)	H
F	O	R	M	U	L	A	E	R	I	S	K	(B)	E	F
I	M	R	E	U	I	A	O	X	A	A	(E)	D	N	E
N	P	Y	T	D	L	M	I	I	T	(D)	G	A	G	A
A	E	T	I	G	I	O	E	M	N	E	I	A	T	S
N	N	E	G	S	A	T	V	R	S	V	R	N	G	I
C	S	F	E	S	S	G	S	E	P	E	E	N	G	B
I	A	A	E	W	R	U	E	T	V	V	I	S	A	I
N	T	S	A	O	P	H	E	O	E	T	S	V	T	L
G	I	P	U	P	O	N	C	R	A	S	A	M	N	I
R	O	P	O	L	I	C	Y	R	O	L	S	E	E	T
A	N	R	D	L	E	T	A	L	U	C	L	A	C	Y
D	T	E	C	N	A	H	N	E	T	A	V	I	R	P
E	R	E	N	X	G	U	A	R	A	N	T	E	E	S
S	D	I	V	E	R	S	I	F	Y	I	N	G	P	T

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Assets, Calculate, Capital, Claims, Compensation, Coverage, Credit, Debt, Decline, Diversifying, Enhance, Event, External, Feasibility, Financing, Formula, Grade, Group, Guarantees, Hedge, Holders, Invest, Issuer, Loss, Mortgage, Percent, Policy, Premium, Private, Promise, Rating, Rises, Risk, Safety, Support, Swap, Tax, Trading, Value, Volume

Yesterday's Answer: Welcome

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Benedicto S. Orencia (aka Jun)

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WHATZIT Solution: Nothing to worry about

WHATZIT?™

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

02YRROW

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CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 14, 2007
Guard files sex harassment suit vs principa
2 hurt in Puerto Rico vehicular crash. PAC
There is still hope for nonimm
all alien workers in the CNMI who are appealing to U.S. lawmakers to retain the provision in the federalization bills that would grant nonimmigrant status to long-term alien workers.
In her message, expected to be read during today's prayer vigil at the American Memorial Park's Amphitheater, Dorormal urged alien workers to "stand strong" as she vowed to continue supporting them "until the fight is won."
See DOROMAL on Page 4
joins Micronesia si
OPINION METER
This week's poll:
With what you know of the CUC situation, do you support the adoption of new

235- NEWS

CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 7-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as $25 per 3 liner ad for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of below packages that fits your budget.

ADS (7DAYS)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	**$25**
• 5-Liner	**$35**
• 3-Liner with picture	**$45**
• 5-Liner with picture	**$55**

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Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

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- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on either Sunday or Monday issues.

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Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

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Lance Armstrong coming out of retirement for Tour

AUSTIN, Texas (AP)—Lance Armstrong is ready to swear off the chips and salsa, climb back on the bike and win an eighth Tour de France. Three years after retiring, the 36-year-old says he'll return to competition and the Tour de France in 2009, giving up relaxed days of a few beers and Tex-Mex food for a self-described monk's life of disciplined training and punishing races.

In a formal statement Armstrong called his comeback an attempt to raise global awareness in his fight against cancer. Just as likely, it's also about his relentless desire to compete and win, especially at the Tour, the race he dominated with a record seven titles from 1999-2005.

Citing the slow pace of last year's Tour and the rush from last month's Leadville 100 race, Armstrong decided it was time to return.

"This kind of obscure bike race, totally kick-started my engine," he told Vanity Fair in an exclusive interview, referring to the lung-searing 100-mile mountain bike race through the Colorado Rockies. "I'm going to try and win an eighth Tour de France."

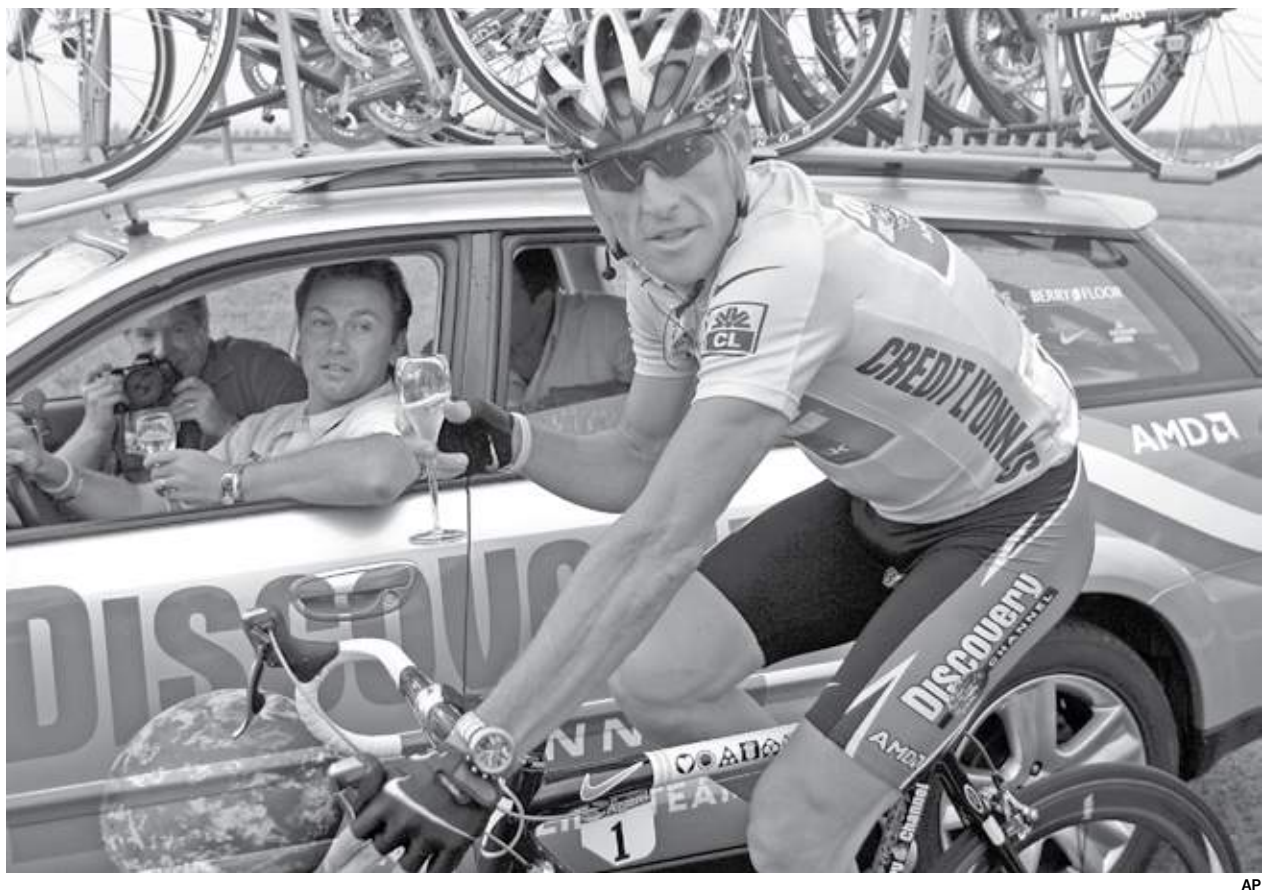
Armstrong's riveting victories over cancer and opponents on the bike, his work for cancer awareness and his gossip-page romances have made him a modern-day American icon.

Professional cycling and particularly the Tour have missed Armstrong's star power, even though skeptics refused to believe he could win without the help of illegal performance-enhancing drugs.

This time, Armstrong's determined to silence the doubters and try to prove he really is clean.

He's even hired a video crew to chronicle his training for 2009, as well as his drug tests, for a possible documentary.

"There's this perception in cycling that this generation is now the cleanest generation we've had in decades, if not forever," said Armstrong, who's never tested positive. "And the generation that I raced with was the dirty generation. ... So there is a nice element here where I can come with really a completely comprehensive program and there will be no way to cheat."



AP

In this July 24, 2005 file photo, Lance Armstrong, of Austin, Texas, toasts with champagne with Discovery team sports director Johan Bruyneel, left, during the 21st and final stage of the Tour de France cycling race between Corbeil-Essonnes and Paris

And if he has his way, no way to lose.

"We're not going to try to win second place," Bill Stapleton, Armstrong's lawyer and longtime confidant, told The Associated Press.

Diagnosed in 1996 with testicular cancer that had spread to his lungs and brain, doctors gave Armstrong less than a 50 percent chance of survival. Surgery and brutal cycles of chemotherapy saved his life.

From there, it was determination and powerful self-discipline that led him back to the bike and his stunning 1999 Tour win.

Armstrong's goal every year was to win the Tour, and he dominated the Pyrenees and Alps like no other rider ever had. This time, he wants to win for his millions of supporters and more important, the 8 million who will die of cancer just this year.

"I am happy to announce that after talking with my children, my family and my closest friends, I have decided to return to professional cycling in order to raise awareness of the global cancer burden," Armstrong said in a statement released to The Associated Press. "This year alone, nearly eight million people will die of cancer worldwide. ... It's now time to address cancer on a global level."

In a video on his foundation's Web site, Armstrong said details of the comeback - such as a team and schedule—will be announced Sept. 24 at the Clinton Global Initiative in New York City.

The 2009 Tour "is the intention," Armstrong's spokesman Mark Higgins told The Associated Press, "but we've got some homework to do over there."

"I think it's great," said longtime teammate George Hincapie, who added he spoke to Armstrong on Tuesday morning. "He's done more than anyone for the sport especially in America and around the world."

But what will he have to do to make a successful comeback?

For starters, he plans to train in Aspen, Colo., in rigorous conditions similar to what he would face in Europe.

Armstrong will be 37 next week. Only one rider older than 34 has ever won the Tour - 36-year-old Firmin Lambot in 1922. And Armstrong wasn't impressed by the crop of younger riders in the 2008 Tour.

"It's not a secret. I mean, the pace was slow," he told Vanity Fair.

Armstrong noted other athletes in his age range competing at a high level, specifically 41-year-old Olympic medalist swimmer Dara Torres and 38-year-old Olympic women's marathon champion Constantina Tomescu-Dita, of Romania.

"Ask serious sports physiologists and they'll tell you age is a wives' tale," he said.

Torres certainly agrees.

"To hear that he's making a comeback, that just shows what kind of athlete he is and that he doesn't think age is anything but a number," she said from her Florida home.

Armstrong also must line up a team. His U.S. Postal Service and Discovery teams were loaded with top lieutenants, such as Hincapie, when he won his previous titles.

On Monday, the cycling journal VeloNews reported on its Web site that Armstrong would compete with the Astana team in the Tour and four other road races - the Amgen Tour of California, Paris-Nice, the Tour de Georgia and the Dauphine-Libere.

Armstrong's close friend and longtime team director, Johan Bruyneel, now with team Astana, sent a text message to the AP declining comment.

But there are no guarantees Astana will race the 2009 Tour. Race officials kept the team out this year because of previous doping violations. Tour director Christian Prudhomme did not return messages seeking comment on Armstrong's decision.

If Armstrong and his team aren't invited in 2009, he plans to appeal directly to French President Nicolas Sarkozy.

"I've already put a call in to him," he said.

Merriman pulls plug on season, will have surgery

SAN DIEGO (AP)—Star outside linebacker Shawne Merriman pulled the plug on his 2008 season on Tuesday when he told the San Diego Chargers he'll have surgery on the two torn ligaments in his left knee.

The loss of Merriman, whose hard hits earned him the nickname "Lights Out," is a big one for a team that has Super Bowl expectations.

Merriman's decision came two days after he barely resembled the player who had an NFL-high 39 1/2 sacks in the past three seasons and played in three straight Pro Bowls.

Merriman, known for his spasmodic sack dance, didn't immediately return e-mails and telephone calls seeking comment. His agent, Tom Condon, declined to comment.

"Shawne informed me he did not feel right and thought it best to shut it down," Chargers general manager A.J. Smith said in a statement. "The road to winning the AFC West just got more difficult, but not impossible. Nothing is impossible. Shawne is a great player and an inspirational leader. He will be missed. We wish him a successful surgery and a speedy recovery."

Smith didn't return calls seeking further comment.

Merriman had only two tackles and no sacks in a shocking 26-24 loss to Carolina at home on Sunday. Even though Merriman appeared to be a non-factor, coach Norv Turner said he thought the linebacker looked "explosive and very physical."

Merriman wore a brace on the knee on Sunday. At one point, he had to go into the locker room to have it readjusted because it was slipping due to sweat.

The Chargers were outgained 388-316 on Sunday by a Panthers team playing without leading receiver Steve Smith.

The Chargers are also without inside linebacker Stephen Cooper, who was suspended by the NFL for the first four games this season for testing positive for a banned stimulant. Cooper led the Chargers with 179 tackles last season, when San Diego won the AFC West at 11-5 and reached the conference championship game before losing 21-12 at New England.

Late in training camp, Merriman said that the posterior cruciate and lateral collateral ligaments in his left knee were torn.

He spent several days getting opinions from four doctors from outside the organization, all of whom recommended he have surgery. But on Aug. 27, he announced that he was going to play, saying, "If you give a football player a decision to play, you know, I'm going to play."

But, he acknowledged, "I'll have the surgery at any point. Nobody knows. I kind of left it on the table when to have it. Not even doctors can tell me that."

Rehab is expected to be six to seven months.

Merriman has said he's had pain in the knee since late in the 2006 season. He also injured the knee during a game at Tennessee on Dec. 9. He sat out the following Sunday, but played in the last three regular-season games and the Chargers' three playoff games, including the loss to New England. He also played in the Pro Bowl.

Merriman had offseason arthroscopic surgery to repair torn cartilage in the knee.

Second-year pro Jyles Tucker is expected to take Merriman's spot. Tucker, who has played in only seven regular-season games, received a five-year contract extension two days before Merriman announced he was going to play rather than have surgery.

Merriman was suspended for four games in 2006 after testing positive for steroids. Both he and his lawyer blamed it on a tainted supplement. The Chargers went 4-0 in his absence.

NFL BRIEFS

Jeff Fisher: Titans couldn't wait on safety of QB Young

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—Jeff Fisher said Tuesday night the Tennessee Titans didn't have the luxury of waiting to be sure about the safety of their quarterback Vince Young before calling police for help in finding him. That led to four hours' of uncertainty Monday night before Young contacted the Titans and met with Fisher, a psychologist and police crisis negotiators at the team's headquarters before driving himself home. Combined with Young's reaction to being heavily booed in Sunday's opener, his mental state has been questioned heavily the past two days. Fisher addressed all those questions on his radio show Tuesday night. "We can never be too careful sometimes, and sometimes you can't jump to conclusions. You have to wait on information and be patient," Fisher said. "The information I had didn't afford us any patience." The only thing known for sure? Young has a sprained medial collateral ligament in his left knee, and Fisher said on his TV show that the quarterback will not play Sunday at Cincinnati. The coach would not give a timetable past that, calling the test results good news and that Young needs to heal up his leg.

Belichick says he's in no rush to sign new QB

BOSTON (AP)—New England Patriots coach Bill Belichick says he's in no rush to sign a new quarterback. Belichick spoke Tuesday, one day after losing MVP Tom Brady for the season with a knee injury. The coach said quarterbacks Tim Rattay and Chris Simms were in Foxborough on Monday, but they didn't work out or take physicals. "I didn't even see them when they were here," Belichick said Tuesday. It appears the team will go into Sunday's game against the New York Jets with two quarterbacks—veteran backup Matt Cassel and rookie Kevin O'Connell. Cassel replaced Brady in New England's 17-10 win over Kansas City. And Belichick says the team hasn't decided on whether to add another quarterback. "We'll look at what our options are and do what's best for the team," Belichick said. He wouldn't rule out bringing in a player new to the Pats' system. "It's a long season and bringing a player in for two, three, four or five weeks to learn the system is a possibility," he said.

Rays rally against Boston, extend AL East lead

BOSTON (AP)—Pinch-hitter Dan Johnson homered off Jonathan Papelbon in the ninth inning to tie it, and Dioner Navarro doubled in the go-ahead run Tuesday as Tampa Bay rallied past Boston 5-4 in the American League.

The Rays had lost four straight and six of seven. The Red Sox had won six of seven, including a 3-0 victory in the series opener—to cut the lead in the AL East from 5 1/2 to one-half game. The Rays are 1 1/2 up and assured of leading the division when they leave town Wednesday.

Boston holds a six-game lead in the AL wild-card over Minnesota.

Tampa Bay took a 3-1 lead in the fourth and still led 3-2 with two outs in the eighth when Dan Wheeler (4-5) walked Kevin Youkilis and then Jason Bay homered for the third straight game to give Boston the lead.

But Papelbon (5-4) blew a save opportunity for the fifth time this season.

Blue Jays 3, White Sox 1, 1st game
Blue Jays 8, White Sox 2, 2nd game

At Chicago, Marco Scutaro hit a leadoff homer and Scott Rolen and Vernon Wells also went deep for Toronto in the second game to sweep the doubleheader and extend its winning streak to 10.

Chicago's Paul Konerko was helped off the field in the fifth inning of the second game with what the team called a mildly sprained medial collateral ligament in his right knee.

Toronto is on its longest winning streak since a franchise-record 11 straight from Aug. 27-Sept. 7, 1998. The Blue Jays moved within seven games of Boston in the AL wild card.

Toronto took the opener as A.J. Burnett (17-10) allowed one hit in seven innings.

Chicago didn't fare any better against Jesse Litsch (11-8) in the nightcap. He allowed two runs and six hits in seven innings.

Scutaro hit his second career leadoff homer, and Rolen's two-run shot highlighted a four-run fifth in which the Blue Jays took a 5-2 lead and knocked out Clayton Richard (2-4).

In the first game, the Blue Jays' Lyle Overbay hit a two-run, two-out double in the sixth off Javier Vazquez (11-13), and Rod Barajas singled in a run in the ninth.

Twins 7, Royals 2

At Minneapolis, Denard Span had three hits and Justin Morneau homered for Minnesota, which trounced Kansas City to close within a game of Chicago in the AL Central.

Jose Guillen had three hits and an RBI and Miguel Olivo homered for Kansas City.

Nick Blackburn (10-8) allowed two runs and five hits in seven innings and the Twins roughed up Brian Bannister (7-15), who gave up seven runs and 10 hits in 3 2-3 innings.

Athletics 3, Tigers 2

At Detroit, Emil Brown's sacrifice fly capped Oakland's two-run eighth inning to beat Detroit.

Rajai Davis had two triples for Oakland, which has won three of four.

Edgar Renteria drove in both runs for Detroit, which had its three-game winning streak snapped.

Down 2-1, the Athletics tied it on Davis' second triple, which came off Fernando Rodney (0-5) and scored pinch-runner Eric Patterson from second. Daric Barton was intentionally walked after Davis' triple and Brown hit a fly ball to center.

Indians 6, Orioles 1

At Baltimore, Jeremy Sowers pitched eight innings of four-hit ball and Travis Hafner had two singles in his long-awaited return from the disabled list as Cleveland downed Baltimore.

Sowers (3-8) gave up one run, struck out seven and walked one.

Hafner went 2-for-4 with a walk in his first game since May 25, when he was placed on the DL with a strained right shoulder. A career .290 hitter, Hafner was batting .217 at the time of the injury.

Yankees 7, Angels 1

At Anaheim, California, Johnny Damon homered twice, Alex Rodriguez added a three-run shot and New York postponed an Angels' AL West title celebration.

AP

Tampa Bay Rays' Dan Johnson (24) is greeted by teammates at the dugout after his solo home run during the ninth inning of Tampa Bay's 5-4 win over the Boston Red Sox in a baseball game at Fenway Park in Boston on Tuesday, Sept. 9, 2008.

The Angels' loss left their magic number at two for clinching their fourth division crown in five years. They can pop the champagne corks Wednesday with a victory in the series finale and a Texas loss at Seattle.

Alfredo Aceves (1-0) allowed one run and five hits in seven innings, struck out two and didn't walk anyone to win his first major league start.

Rangers 7, Mariners 3

At Seattle, Marlon Byrd and Taylor Teagarden both had two-out, two-run doubles and drove in three runs as Texas downed Seattle.

Byrd's double came in the first inning on a ball that likely should have been caught by left fielder Raul Ibanez. Teagarden's shot was in the fifth when reliever Randy Messenger was one pitch away from getting out of a jam.

Cardinals 4, Cubs 3

At St. Louis, the St. Louis Cardinals scored on a play at the plate in the bottom of the ninth inning to beat the Chicago Cubs and boost their National League playoff hopes.

Cardinals slugger Albert Pujols homered for the third straight game as St. Louis crept within 3-1/2 games of wildcard holder Milwaukee, while the Cubs could not improve their 4-1/2 game lead atop the NL Central division.

With scores tied and bases loaded in the ninth, pinch-runner Brendan Ryan charged home from third on an infield hit, just beating the throw to home plate and scoring the winning run.

Dodgers 6, Padres 2

In San Diego, Los Angeles extended its lead in the NL West to 2-1/2 games by beating San Diego.

Andre Ethier drove in four runs and Manny Ramirez homered for the Dodgers as they beat their Southern California rival and recorded a ninth win from 10 games.

The Padres, long out of realistic contention for the playoffs after a disappointing campaign in which they were expected to contend for the NL West, were officially eliminated from postseason contention.

Mets 10, Nationals 8

In New York, the home team downed Washington to increase its lead in the NL East to 2-1/2 games.

Mets slugger Carlos Delgado hit two homers for the second straight game, while Carlos Beltran had a go-ahead shot to reach 100 RBIs.

It was the first of a run of 12 straight New York games in which it will meet the bottom two teams in the division, putting them in prime position to clinch a playoff berth.

Marlins 10, Phillies 8

In Philadelphia, the home team gave up an eight-run deficit to Florida and couldn't quite overhaul it, hurting its playoff chances.

Trailing 10-4, the Phillies rallied for four runs in the sixth but still fell 2-1/2 games behind New York in the East.

Jorge Cantu, Mike Jacobs and Cody Ross homered for Florida, which ended a three-game losing streak that had put them all but out of postseason contention.

Giants 5, Diamondbacks 4

In San Francisco, Arizona gave up the winning run to San Francisco in the ninth inning, suffering its fifth straight loss.

The Diamondbacks have lost nine in a row on the road and fell 2-1/2 games behind Los Angeles in the NL West.

A two-run homer drew Arizona level at 4-4 in the top of the ninth, before Eugenio Velez hit a one-out single in the bottom of the inning to drive in the Giants' winner.

Reds 5, Brewers 4, 11 innings

In Milwaukee, Cincinnati's Brandon Phillips hit the go-ahead single with two outs in the 11th inning two pitches after he broke a finger attempting a bunt, downing Milwaukee.

The Brewers' third straight loss cut their lead in the wild-card race to 3-1/2 games and they lost an opportunity to close on NL Central leader Chicago.

Braves 5, Rockies 4, 10 innings

In Atlanta, Colorado pitcher Taylor Buchholz was called for a balk in the 10th inning, allowing Atlanta's winning run to stroll in from third base.

Buchholz had already moved his feet to begin his windup when he paused, apparently wanting to restart the pitch. The home plate umpire instantly threw up his arms to signal a balk, thus ending the game. Colorado has lost three straight, effectively ending its late-season playoff charge.

Astros 9, Pirates 3

In Houston, Lance Berkman hit a three-run homer to spark Houston's win over Pittsburgh and keep the Astros in the playoff frame.

Berkman also had an RBI double for the Astros, who have won four straight and moved within 4 games of wildcard holder Milwaukee.

Houston starter Randy Wolf shut down Pittsburgh after a shaky first inning. He allowed only four hits in seven innings to improve to 4-1 in nine starts since arriving from San Diego.

NBA BRIEFS

Blazers' Frye has ankle surgery

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP)—Portland Trail Blazers forward Channing Frye will likely miss the start of the regular season after having surgery to remove bone spurs from his left ankle. The arthroscopic surgery was performed Monday in Southern California, and the team said he is expected to miss 8-to-10 weeks. The Trail Blazers open their season Oct. 28. The 6-foot-11 Frye averaged 6.8 points in 78 games last season. He's expected to again be a key reserve, backing up power forward LaMarcus Aldridge. The Knicks selected Frye with the eighth pick of the 2005 draft. He was sent to the Trail Blazers two years later as part of the Zach Randolph deal. Forward Ike Diogu, the ninth pick of the 2005 draft, was acquired by the Trail Blazers this summer, and could see additional time in Frye's absence.

Bryant: No surgery on pinkie finger

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Kobe Bryant will not have surgery on his right pinkie because recovery would take too long. Bryant has played with damaged ligaments in the finger since February, but said Tuesday that he won't have surgery after seeking opinions from hand specialists. "When the doctors told me recovery from a procedure could be 12 weeks, I just decided now was not the time to have surgery," Bryant said on the Web site kb24.com. "What it really came down to for me is that I just didn't want to miss any time 'punching the clock' for the Lakers, given all we are trying to accomplish as a team this NBA season." Bryant averaged 28.3 points while playing in all 82 games despite injuring the finger Feb. 5 against the New Jersey Nets. The Lakers guard put off the surgery until after the Beijing Olympics, where he helped lead the United States to the gold medal.

Sixers reward Cheeks with new deal

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—The Philadelphia 76ers revamped their roster this summer with key signings. Now, they've made sure their coach will be there, too. The 76ers gave Maurice Cheeks his second contract extension in seven months Tuesday, capping a busy summer highlighted by the addition of free agent forward Elton Brand. Cheeks previously signed a one-year extension on Feb. 20. Terms of the latest deal were not disclosed. "I always wanted to be here, no matter what," Cheeks said during a conference call. Cheeks led the team to the playoffs last season, where the 76ers lost in the first round to the Detroit Pistons. After an 18-30 start, Philadelphia won 18 of its next 23 games and wound up at 40-42 and the sixth seed in the Eastern Conference. "I had a little luck on my side," Cheeks said. Cheeks will have a lot more talent on his roster in 2008-09, with the addition Brand and free agents Donyell Marshall, Theo Ratliff, Royal Ivey and Kareem Rush. The 76ers also re-signed restricted free agent forward Andre Iguodala and guard Lou Williams, in addition to drafting first-round pick Marreese Speights from Florida.

Group gears up for inaugural cage tourney

Teams interested to join Pilipino Contract Workers Association, Inc.'s Inaugural Inter-Color Basketball League later this month are asked to coordinate with its organizer regularly before the league opens shop.

Fando Muleta said coaches/representatives of interested teams should get it touch with him to get updates on tournament rules, uniforms and schedule.

The PILCOWA caging will kick off on Sept. 28 at the Century Insurance Center basketball court.

Games will be held four times a week. There will be two games each every Tuesday and Thursday, while three matches will be played every Saturday and Sunday.

Matches on weekdays will start at 6pm, while weekend games will begin at 3pm.

But schedules are subject to changes depending on the number of teams that will join the inaugural league.

Muleta said the inter-color caging will be the first project of PILCOWA, Inc., a new workers group organization formed early this year. PILCOWA is under the leadership of president Ronnie Doca.

The association is hoping to hold the league every year. Winners in next month's league will receive trophies, while members of the champion team will be awarded medals.

Entrance fee is $500.

For more information, contact Muleta at 285-9783. ***(Roselyn B.Monroyo)***

Purefoods off to Qatar, Singapore for tough games

Purefoods has effected a revamp in its lineup, and it will see how the new mix works as it plays goodwill exhibition games in Qatar and Singapore.

The Giants' management is signing up draftees Beau Belga and Jonathan Fernandez, and free agents Chad Alonzo and Aaron Aban before leaving for Doha, Qatar Wednesday.

"These are good pre-season training. We can't go wrong with these trips... all expenses paid which can help fast track our effort to build up the team," said Purefoods coach Ryan Gregorio.

In Qatar, the Giants will be up against the Qatari and the Jordanian national teams. After the Qatar trip, the Giants will swing by Singapore to take on the Singapore Slingers.

"It's great to be mentioned in the same breath with Ginebra. Maybe, we're getting these invites because of it," said Gregorio, referring to a recent survey saying Purefoods is now tied with Ginebra as the most popular teams in the PBA.

Belga, Fernandez, Alonzo and Aban are beefing up the Purefoods team now down to seven players in James Yap, Kerby Raymundo, Rico Villanueva, Roger Yap, Peter June Simon, Jondan Salvador and Chico Lanete.

Fighting out for the last three slots are Richard Yee, Ardy Larong, Rob Sanz and rookie free agent Al Vergara. Romel Adducul has beaten cancer and is now trying to get back in shape.

"Romel is far from being competitive. He's working out and everything depends on his condition. There's always a slot reserved for him. In time, he'll be ready," said Gregorio.

The youthful Purefoods mentor doesn't discount the possibility of trades to fill up the last three slots in the team that finished second behind Sta. Lucia Realty in last Philippine Cup.

"(Beau) Belga is a solid acquisition boosting our frontline. Chad (Alonzo), (Aaron) Aban and (Jonathan) Fernandez, at three spot, are young players but they can compete based on practice. I certainly have no problem at two-guard with James Yap and June Simon. I'm okay at the point with Roger Yap and Chico (Lanete) but I'm still looking for one and I'm seriously considering Al Vergara," said Gregorio. ***(www.pba.com.ph)***

SGA September tourney this weekend

Saipan Golf Association will hold its September Ace of the Month Tournament this Sunday, Sept. 14, at the Laolao Bay Golf Resort east course.

According to tournament coordinator Mariano Fajardo participants must check in at 8am to make the 9am tee off time. Slots are available for 24 players and SGA said first players to show up early, will definitely be the first to roll the grounds.

Veteran golfers Mariano Fajardo and Joe Sablan, homerun menace Ned Norita, last year's annual champion Larry Deleon Guerrero, Carl Hocog, retired judge Edward Manibusan, former SGA president Nobert Sablan, and club newcomer and activist Ron Hodges have bragging rights for the first seven months of SGA's season as they secured the January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August Ace titles, respectively.

For more information about SGA's September Ace of the Month Tournament and rest of the club's competitions, call SGA president Martin Sablan at 483-6278, vice president John Takai at 484-3045, secretary Larry Guerrero at 287-1052, or tournament coordinator Mariano Fajardo at 483-2549. ***(SGA)***

BASEBALL

From Page 28

want to play baseball or track or any other sport.

"Train hard, play hard and most importantly, have fun."

Tyrone the MVP

Omar said winning the MVP this year was a surprise and he felt great about it.

He dedicates the award to his teammates because "without them it would never happen. I got a couple of awards before this one."

His best tournament was in the Philippines representing the CNMI at the Junior League Asia-Pacific Regional Tournament.

"I was hot with the bat and me and John Sablan pulled of a triple play," he recalled.

While out of the playing field, Omar visits McDonal's regularly and grabs a double cheeseburger with large fries. "I only do this because I get nervous and to relax myself."

Omar listens to her best friend Juanette Villagomez's jams.

While he talks seriously about his games, Omar also has his funny side.

He said he just follow whatever his coaches have in mind but right now he is on vacation just like his idol Bolt of Jamaica, who reset the 100m and 200m sprints as well as won gold in the 4x100m relay in the recent 2008 Beijing Olympics.

The CNMI is not sending a team to next year's Pacific Mini Games in Cook Islands, thus Omar is setting his sights on the 2010 Micronesian Games to be hosted by Palau.

"Hopefully they allow me to play both track and baseball. If they do, then I'm gonna try and help the boys defend our gold medal in baseball. And for track I'm gonna try and bust out my best Usain Bolt impression and set Micronesian records in the 100m, 200m, and the hardest 4x100m."

And if he is in the mood, 'I might just shock everyone in the 400m" which he says he's not really that good.

He thanked his family, Kristy, my grandfather and mom for their support. He also appreciates the encouragement of Dwayne Davis, Christine Kaipat, and Juanette Villagomez .

G-STARS

From Page 28

less than three four minutes left in the match.

But the G-Stars' had a 15-10 windup with Nate's twin brother, Dan, making six of them, to preserve the victory.

Dan finished in double figures with 10 points. Sean Sablan also had 10 points, nailing six in the closing minutes of the game.

Brel was the lone bight spot for the Suns' offensive game, hitting 14 markers. Juan Maratita and Ryan Lisua combined for 16 points.

Meanwhile, tonight's game will have a tail-meets-end tale, as the streaking Southern Sonics collide with the winless G-Rollers II.

The Sonics are aiming for their fifth straight win, while the G-Rollers II are looking to end their four-game losing skid.

Last night's match has the CNMI Junior Nationals meeting the Chalan Kanoa Saints, but results of the game were unavailable at press time.

The Junior Nationals were gunning for their third win in a row after losing to the Sonics in the league's opening game, while the Saints were targeting their first win in three matches.

G-Stars 57 – D. Mateo 20, D. Mateo 10, Sablan 10, S. Rangamar 7, Jung 3, Manalili 2, Kenty 2.

Suns 48 – Brel 14, Maratita 9, R. Lisua 7, Salas 4, Kiyoshi 4, Babauta 4, M. Lisua 2, Fleming 2.

Scoring by halves: 29-23, 57-48.

Referees: Gilbert Espinosa and Gabriel White.

GAMES

From Page 28

tween GCA and MBA would be played tomorrow.

Explaining the rained out games on the opening day of competition, tournament committee chair Becky Covarrubias said the volleyball season occurs during the rainy season and none of the schools have no gym.

She said some courts dry faster than others and the weather is just unpredictable.

Whispering Palms played against SDA but the match lasted for about 30 minutes and the score was unavailable as of press time.

The Coalition of Private Schools Sports Association, or COPSSA, is a co-ed league with middle school and high school divisions.

If both competing schools have entries in the two divisions then the middle school game will always play at 3:30pm and the high school will follow 10 minutes after the end of the middle school match.

All matches are a best-of-three sets to win. If a school only has a middle school team or a high school team then the match will be played at 3:30pm.

Each school plays each opponent twice giving a chance to play away and at home.

Once the regular season ends, organizers will take the win/loss records of each school and seed each team in their respective divisions for the tournament.

The tournament runs for three days for one week. The middle school will play the week of Oct. 27 and the high school will play the week of Nov. 3. Both tournaments are single elimination.

There are four COPSSA committee members. Covarrubias (President), vice chair is Sean Maycock from SDA, Becca Newman from SIS (Secretary), and Vanesa Pritchard from Calvary (Treasurer).

Covarrubias used to coach the GCA volleyball team for a number of years but is technically not affiliated with any school.

She is now working at the Community Guidance Center as the Tobacco Quit Line Coordinator.

FIBA

From Page 28

teams from the CNMI, Palau, Tahiti, New Caledonia, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, and powerhouse Australia.

The eight teams are divided into two pools with CNMI, Guam, PNG, and New Caledonia comprising Group B.

The CNMI Junior Nationals are composed of Jericho Cruz, Jayvan Tarkong, Allen Moses, Marvin Rabauliman, Jomar Tumaquip, James Camacho, Joseph White, Jose Castro, Bill Babauta, and Antonio Borja.

Babauta and Borja are already on Guam as they are studying in UOG and will be joined by the rest of the team on Sept. 26.

The CNMI cagers, who are coached by Rufino Aguino, will debut against PNG and members of the basketball community in the Commonwealth can monitor the team's performance through FIBA's new program.

The FIBA Live Statistics program facilitates the capture of game statistics as they happen, and also webcasts this information live on the internet. Data gathered is fully integrated with FIBA Organizer so competition and historical statistics can be updated after the game.

To access updates about the tournament, viewers just need to log to FIBA Oceania website, look for the tournament name and click LIVE.

This year's Oceania youth caging will have Australia as team to beat in both the men's and women's divisions.

Australia made it into the finals in both divisions winning against New Zealand in the women's title game, 56-47. The Aussies lost to the Kiwis in the men's division, 94-104.

The 2008 edition of the Oceania caging will feature a 3-on-3 tournament as a side event. The 3-on-3 tournament will have players from one participating nation teaming up with cagers from other squads.

Games will be played in the main mall area and carpark of Micronesian Mall. The tournament will be run under the new FIBA 33 rules, which will be used in the 2010 Youth Olympics in Singapore.

Aside for the 3-on-3 tournament, participants will also attend HIV/AIDS awareness clinics, players skill development workshop, and fitness test.

At the end of the tournament, FIBA Oceania will select 10 players each in the men's and women's divisions who will make it to the All-Star Team and compete in the Australian National Championships next year.

Coaches will be asked to nominate players for the All-Star Selection at a technical meeting in Guam.

Players will then be named by the selection panel, which is headed by Patrick Hunt, manager of player and coach development with Basketball Australia.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

MLB STANDINGS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Tampa Bay	86	57	.601	_
Boston	85	59	.590	1 1/2
Toronto	78	66	.542	8 1/2
New York	77	68	.531	10
Baltimore	64	79	.448	22

Central Division

Chicago	80	64	.556	_
Minnesota	79	65	.549	1
Cleveland	70	73	.490	9 1/2
Detroit	70	75	.483	10 1/2
Kansas City	61	82	.427	18 1/2

West Division

Los Angeles	87	57	.604	_
Texas	71	74	.490	16 1/2
Oakland	66	78	.458	21
Seattle	56	87	.392	30 1/2

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division

New York	81	63	.563	_
Philadelphia	79	66	.545	2 1/2
Florida	73	72	.503	8 1/2
Atlanta	63	82	.434	18 1/2
Washington	56	89	.386	25 1/2

Central Division

Chicago	86	58	.597	_
Milwaukee	82	63	.566	4 1/2
St. Louis	78	66	.542	8
Houston	78	67	.538	8 1/2
Cincinnati	66	79	.455	20 1/2
Pittsburgh	60	84	.417	26

West Division

Los Angeles	74	71	.510	_
Arizona	71	73	.493	2 1/2
Colorado	67	78	.462	7
San Francisco	64	80	.444	9 1/2
San Diego	56	89	.386	18

Yesterday's Games

Florida 10, Philadelphia 8
Atlanta 5, Colorado 4, 10 innings
N.Y. Mets 10, Washington 8
Cincinnati 5, Milwaukee 4, 11 innings
Houston 9, Pittsburgh 3
St. Louis 4, Chicago Cubs 3
L.A. Dodgers 6, San Diego 2
San Francisco 5, Arizona 4
Toronto 3, Chicago White Sox 1st game
Toronto 8, Chicago White Sox 2nd game
Tampa Bay 5, Boston 4
Oakland 3, Detroit 2
Cleveland 6, Baltimore 1
Minnesota 7, Kansas City 2
N.Y. Yankees 7, L.A. Angels 1
Texas 7, Seattle 3

By The Associated Press

LOCAL SCORES

ROTARY STANDINGS

Southern Sonics	4	0
G-Rollers I	2	0
San Antonio Sixers	2	0
CNMI Jr. Nationals	2	1
Kontenders	2	2
G-Stars	2	2
C.K. Saints	0	2
Suns	0	3
G-Rollers II	0	4

Tsunami Red Cross fall swim lessons start Saturday

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The fall session of the Tsunami Saipan Swimming Center's swimming lessons will begin this Saturday at the south pool of the Fiesta Resort and Spa Saipan.

Tsunami Saipan will be holding swimming lessons for five Saturdays in coordination with the American Red Cross. The five-weekend sessions will be handled by Tsunami Saipan officials, volunteers, and swimmers.

The list of coaches include Bobby and Tami Winkfield, Stan Good, Mike Villagomez, Rezne Wong, Cooper Graf, Kai Staal, Kensuke, Shin, and Hiro Kimura, Mina Minami, Marystar Welch, Amanda Johnson, Annie Camacho, and Karen Buettner. Assistant coaches are Kaisei Toda and Ashley Welch.

Every swim lesson will be a one-hour session and will run 10am to 11am.

Tsunami Saipan coach Hiro Kimura said they increased the number of sessions from four to five to give participants more time to learn the basics of the sport.

During the June and July session, Tsunami conducted only four sessions for more than 50 swimmers.

This fall, only the first 55 individuals to register will be allowed to join the weekend swim lessons. Registration this Saturday will run from 9:30am to 10am.

"We will be giving lessons on a first come, first serve basis," Hiro said.

He added that participants will be given certification upon completion of the lesson.

Only participants who are at least five years old are allowed to join the sessions, whose next four lessons will take place on Sept. 20 and 27 and Oct. 4 and 11.

Entrance fee is $30 per participant. For families, each member will only pay $25.

For more information, contact Yuko Kimura via email at tsunamisaipan@yahoo.com.jp.

Tsunami Saipan Swimming Center will kick off the fall session of its American Red Cross swimming lessons this Saturday at the south pool of the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan.

MARK RABAGO

Bicol Express smokes competition in Monday Night League

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR
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REPORTER

Bicol Express sizzled via the roll-off tie-break system at the expense of SBC and took away the title for the 6th season of the Philippine Bowling Association Monday Night League sponsored by Budweiser.

Both teams finished the tournament with identical 43-29 win-loss records but Bicol Express stoked the fire on SBC in a dramatic finish at the Saipan Bowling Center on Aug. 25.

The awarding of prizes and trophies was done on Sept. 1 with the Bicolano champions pocketing the top purse of $375. Bicol Express is composed of Kitz Barja, Paul Bea, Totie Limpin, Edwin Guzman, and Rey Madrilejos,

SBC settled for the second place prize of $275, while third place finisher Super Fafa won $200 after compiling 40 wins and 32 losses. Completing the cast were Zimbuka, fourth place and $100, and Mix Breed, fifth and $50. Both teams had 40-32 win-loss records.

Super Fafa topped three of four team categories in the special awards that were given out including the high game scratch with a total of 861 pins, high game with handicap (916) and high series scratch (2,371).

The team also placed second with 2,521 pins in the high series handicap for their total earnings of $370.

Nila's Salon totaled 2,569 pins in the high series to win the category. It placed second in high game with handicap with 913 and second in high series scratch with 2,254 for a total team prize of $110.

SBC had 823 pins for second place in high game scratch that won them $30 and total team earnings of $305.

For the individual awards, Kitz Barja of Bicol Express and Raul Dumapit showed some sort of rivalry and dominance of the tournament as they topped two each of the six categories.

Barja finished with 282 pins in the high game scratch with Dumapit placing second with 269. Yho Villavicencio came-up with 218 to top the ladies division.

Barja had 293 in high game with handicap while Tony Verdaguer finished with 285 while Joan Varona prevailed in the ladies class with 254.

Dumapit totaled 703 as against Barja's 677 in the high series scratch, while Teregeyo asserted her billing in the ladies with 594.

Dumapit also topped the high series handicap with 715 while Verdaguer had 713 and Teregeyo won with 687.

In the high average, Robert Talavera (199) and Teregoyo (172.60) won the men and ladies categories, respectively.

Raphael Zapanta (+14.4 to average) and Villavicencio (+11.5 to average) were adjudged as the men and ladies most improved player.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

In the picture together with the trophies donated by Budweiser and MARPAC are Kitz Barja, Paul Bea, Totie Limpin, and Edwin Guzman. Another member not in photo is Rey Madrilejos of the Philippine Consulate.

MARK RABAGO

Local fight fans are expected to come in droves for "Rites of Passage 5: Raging Warriors" set on Sept. 27 at the Trench Tech Gym in Afetnas.

AFC official to conduct one-day clinic Saturday

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Asian Football Confederation's John Whittle will arrive on Saipan this afternoon to conduct a one-day workshop on Saturday.

The free workshop is open to all interested individuals who want to learn how to coach youth or grassroots teams or simply the basics of the sport.

The clinic will run from 9:30am to 5:15pm at the Azucena Room of the Fiesta Resort and Spa Saipan.

Whittle is the acting director of AFC's Grassroots & Youth (G&Y) Department.

The department was created through Vision Asia, which is the organization's grand plan for a continent-wide program to raise the standards of Asian football at all levels, from competitions to administration, and to sports science.

President Mohamed Bin Hammam launched Vision Asia in September 2002, believing that with Asia's more than three billion population, it can produce many world-class football nations. His ultimate goal is for an Asian team to one day claim the FIFA World Cup.

AFC's Grassroots & Youth Department is guided by its mission to increase the football playing base, ensure a positive and enjoyable life experience for children and young adults by implementing programs and activities that raise the standard of performance overall, and support the development of each individual player within the game of football in the continent.

Through its program, the department hopes to achieve the following: mass participation; football free from racism and discrimination; fair play; safe environment; football as a school of life; football as an enjoyable activity; start early; golden age of football training; ongoing player development; suitable age-group competitions qualification of grassroots and youth coaches; merit-based selection; follow age regulations; good management; appropriate facilities and equipment for training and playing; and promoting volunteerism.

Under the department's program is player development, which is divided into two categories—grassroots and youth.

Grassroots program is for players in the 6-and-under, 10-and-under, 11-and-under, and 13-and-under age groups, while the youth side is for strikers in the 14-and-under, 16-and-under, 17-and-under, and 20-and-under.

Each age group represents the phases of player development.

The fun phase for the grassroots is for players age six to nine years old. In this phase, players are exposed to a wide range of basic movement activities and coordination skills. They are also thought about punctuality, regular attendance, team work, courtesy, good sportsmanship, tidying up, and asking permission to miss training and games.

Players who are in the 11 to 13 age group will move up to the foundation phase, which is considered as the "Golden Age of Learning" in relation to motor skills development. In this phase, players should have mastered fundamental skills and skills development is more important than the results of the match.

The next level is the formative phase, which is for 14-and-under and 16-and-under players. At this time, players are undergoing significant biological changes and coaches and parents should understand these changes and help players come to terms with new challenges.

The final phase is for players in the 17 to 20 age group. At this stage, players learn to be independent and are responsible for their own behavior and decisions. But all involved should still provide support.

Meanwhile, individuals wishing to join this Saturday's workshop are asked to pre-register with the Northern Mariana Islands Football Association. For more information, call Sarah Brostrom at 235-0173 or via email at info@nmifa.com

'Pinchi' vs. 'No Luv' in Rites of Passage

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR
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REPORTER

Two of the CNMI's most promising youngsters in the mixed martial arts scene will be showcased in the "Rites of Passage 5: Raging Warriors" on Sept. 27 at the Trench Tech Gym in Afetnas.

The main event will feature Marianas Elite's Derrick "Pinchi" Rangamar going up against Trench Tech's Chris "No Luv" Laayug.

The event will also feature first-time grapplers who want to establish themselves in the fighting arena.

Promoter and president of Trench Tech Inc. Justis F. "Cuki" Alvarez said that Rangamar and Laayug are two of the youngest but very experienced warriors from two of the top schools on the island.

"Rites of Passage" is an event that caters mainly to first time fighters and/or those who have fought and want to redeem their performance.

Alvarez said this event is the "proving ground" for young up-and-coming fighters looking to earn their "Rites to Pass" onto the next level.

They have also chance to grapple in bigger and more prestigious events such as Trench Warz and PXC (Pacific Xtreme Combat) in Guam, "where they can earn really good talent fees and fight money."

Competitors for the "Rites of Passage" are exclusively from Saipan.

Alvarez said there would be at least 16-18 matches lined up for the upcoming event.

The other pairings will be coming out soon.

Tickets are now on sale for $20 at the following locations: Boarderline, 67Zero Rocksteady Shop, Trench Tech Gym, and Hannam Market.

Tsunami Red Cross fall swim lessons start Saturday

The fall session of the Tsunami Saipan Swimming Center's swimming lessons will begin this Saturday at the south pool of the Fiesta Resort and Spa Saipan.

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Lance Armstrong coming out of retirement for Tour

Lance Armstrong is ready to swear off the chips and salsa, climb back on the bike and win an eighth Tour de France.

24

Baseball runs through Tyrone's veins

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

Everyone already knows about his exploits in the sports scene—both as a sprinter and as a baseball player.

While Tyrone Omar likes to indulge in any sport that suits him, baseball is still supreme for this multi-sport athlete.

Omar added another feather to his cap by winning the 2008 Budweiser Saipan Major League regular season most valuable player award.

This only proves how passionate the 21-year-old athlete is when it comes America's pastime.

"I guess I love the game because I was raised around it so it's like part of me," said Omar, who gives the credit to his family by teaching him the rudiments of the sport.

All around him, his relatives and family play baseball, thus the game is in blood and runs through his veins.

It was in 2000 that he had his first taste organized baseball while playing with the Glazers.

He also played with the Ol'Aces and had brief stints with the Brewers and the Hustlers.

Omar's favorite player in the Major League Baseball is Ken Griffey Jr. because "he plays all out in every game."

Because it's a team sport, Omar always has fun with the game and it's a joy that he shares with his teammates.

Omar also volunteers that he wants to continue representing the CNMI in big tournaments such as the Pacific Games or Micronesian Games.

Micronesia's Usain Bolt

While baseball is closest to his heart, Omar, however, admits that he wants to become the Usain Bolt of Micronesia.

Omar said while he has training partners when it goes down to actual competition, "you're on your own."

At the track, he said "there is no one to blame but yourself if you mess up with your performance."

So he makes a point to be always prepared and focused.

"I just love the rush that comes with my events, breaking records hopefully but the most important thing to me is to make my family, friends, and the whole CNMI proud."

Omar's philosophy in life is to "live life with love and respect for everyone even though you don't know them."

He has this advice to kids who

See BASEBALL on Page 26

Multi-sport athlete Tyrone Omar proudly shows off the 2008 Budweiser Saipan Major League regular season most valuable player award he won last month during the awards ceremony at the Francisco M. Palacios Baseball Field.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

G-Stars outshine Suns in Rotary caging

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

G-Stars cruised to their second straight win in the Saipan Rotary Club Youth Basketball League after outclassing the Suns, 57-48, Tuesday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

The G-Stars dropped their first two games, but got their act together in the next two games to continue their climb in the team standings. They are now tied with the Kontenders in fourth place.

The Suns absorbed their third win as many games, as they were outshone by the G-Stars.

Nate Mateo led the G-Stars' back-to-back win, drilling 20 points. He scored the G-Stars' first eight points to give his team early control of the game, 8-2.

The G-Stars kept the driver's seat at halftime, 29-23, with Mateo adding six more points, and getting one field goal each from his four other teammates.

Jimmy Brel made nine of the Suns' first 11 markers in the second half to foil the G-Stars' bid for a breakaway.

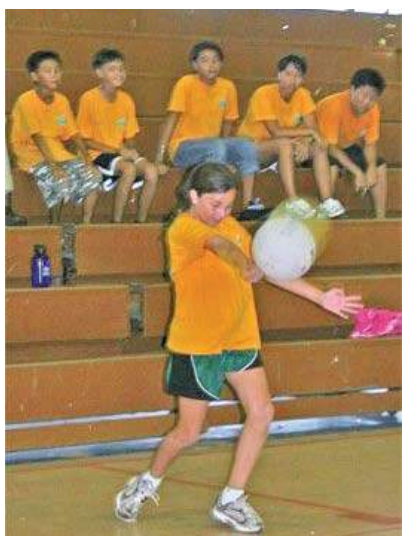
The Suns hung in there until it cut the G-Stars' lead to four, 38-42, with

See G-STARS on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

G-Stars' Joseph Jung pulls up for a fade-away jumper during their game against the Suns in the Rotary caging Tuesday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Games resume today in Private School Volleyball



By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

Middle school defending champion Seventh Day Adventist will host Saipan International School's Blue Team in today's resumption of games in the 2008 Coalition of Private Schools Volleyball League.

SDA and SIS-Blue also meet in the high school division starting at 3:30pm.

Five other games will be played in other venues. High school defending champion Grace Christian Academy will host SIS-Green, while Calvary Christian Academy will face Marianas Baptist Academy.

The other games in the Middle school division will be Mt. Carmel vs. Whispering Palms, SIS-Green vs. GCA and CCA vs. Saipan Community School.

Meanwhile, the opening match be-

See GAMES on Page 26

A Whispering Palms player prepares to serve during their game against Mt. Carmel School in the junior varsity division of the 2007 CNMI Coalition of Private Schools Volleyball League.

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

FIBA Live Statistics to be used in Guam tourney

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

FIBA Oceania will be using the new FIBA Live Statistics program for the first time in the 7th FIBA Oceania Youth Tournament, giving basketball aficionados outside Guam a chance to get live updates on the 19-and-under caging.

Guam will be hosting the annual tournament from Sept. 27 to Oct. 5 at the University of Guam Fieldhouse in Mangilao.

The host will be battling the 19-under title against

See FIBA on Page 26